



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

How to Prepare For the Big One

Pack Your Earthquake Kit and Join the Noe Emergency Response Team

By Liz Highleyman

In 2001, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) warned of three major threats: a terrorist attack in New York City, a hurricane in New Orleans, and an earthquake in San Francisco. Since then, two of these disasters have come to pass—and the U.S. Geological Survey says there's a 60 percent chance the Bay Area will experience a major earthquake within the next 30 years.

You're on Your Own

As the federal response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita has demonstrated, citizens may be on their own in the aftermath of a disaster that overwhelms local services and infrastructure. In fact, the San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) warns that residents should be prepared to fend for themselves for at least 72 hours.

"The best thing the public can do is to take care of themselves," says Annemarie Conroy, head of the San Francisco Office of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. "It's people's civic duty, so the city can focus on helping those who most need help."

Unlike hurricanes, earthquakes come without warning, but there are several

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

The Man (and the Woman) Behind The Window Signs On Church Street

By Lorraine Sanders

He's a man with many names: the Mayor of Church Street, the Man in the Window, the Man Who Posts Those Signs. His business card identifies him as, simply, "Octogenarian." Whether or not you know Dean Bistline, it's likely you've met the little paper signs in the first-floor windows of his Church Street home. The grape and canary-yellow Victorian, owned by his daughter Deanna and her husband, sits between Lovejoy's Tea Room and Fattoush Restaurant near the intersection of Church and Clipper streets and just across the sidewalk from a J-line Muni stop. Bistline, a former public school teacher who looks like a jolly sea captain crossed with a plainclothes Santa Claus, is a regular fixture in the first-floor window.

Since Bistline, 83, and his wife of 29 years, Susan, 67, moved to Noe Valley from Washington, D.C., in 1989 to live with his daughter, the signs have greeted passersby with nuggets of wisdom, thoughtful meditations on life, and the occasional political statement.



Jesse Zele, shown sitting on his favorite bench in this 2001 photo, was a kind and selfless man who captured the hearts of pedestrians on 24th Street.

Photo by Donald Flach

Bench Becomes a Memorial to Jesse Zele

By Sue Cattoche

On the morning of Tuesday, Sept. 6, Noe Valley lost a beloved citizen. Jesse Zele passed away at St. Luke's Hospital from complications stemming from lung cancer. He was 60.

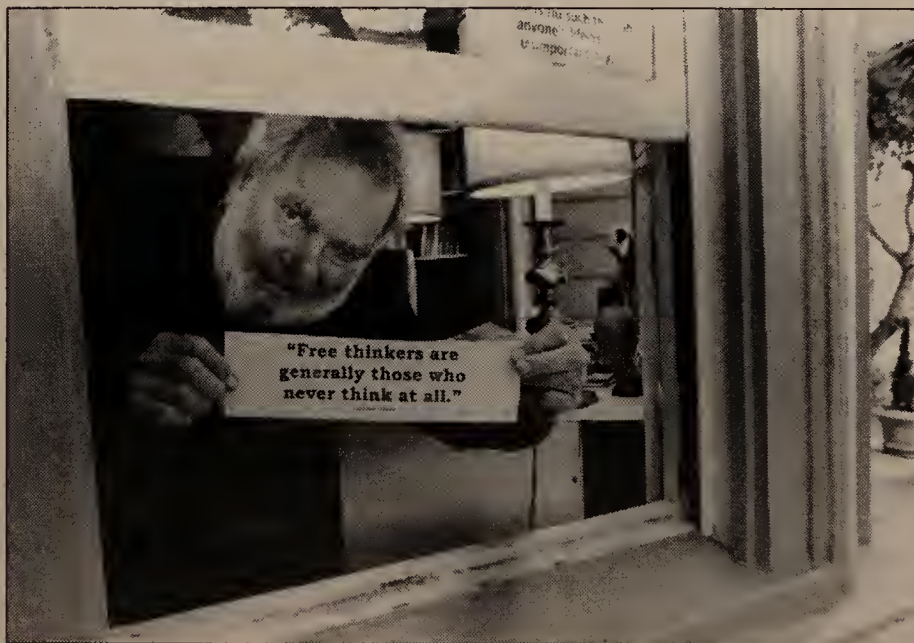
Zele resided on Worth Street in Eureka Valley, but conducted the business of his life from a bench on 24th Street (near Le Zinc) that he affectionately called his "office." Sporting a jaunty black beret and a puckish grin, this sprite of a man entered Noe Valley as a homeless scavenger, but he departed as a respected and contributing member of the community. Upon news of his death, an impromptu shrine

of flowers, candles, photos, trinkets, and testimonials appeared on the bench where he stopped each day to drink his morning coffee, work a crossword puzzle, or chat with his many friends.

A native of Los Angeles, Zele was born with a curvature of the spine that gradually worsened over the years. Later on, he injured a foot in a motorcycle accident. He is survived by his parents, who reside in a South Carolina nursing home, and a cousin, Donna McMahon of South Carolina. He was predeceased by a brother, Thomas Scott Ezelle, who died in 1970.

Most who knew him admired his pluck

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People who check out Dean Bistline's window on Church Street get a lift from the pithy sayings he and his wife, Susan, have been posting for 16 years.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

"I came here six weeks before the [Loma Prieta] earthquake," Bistline recalls. "The first Bush went into the Gulf about that time, and I decided I needed to say something about it."

That first sign, posted on the garage door opening onto Clipper Street, declared, "I love my country, I fear my government."

Since then, what began as one sign has morphed into three and migrated to the front of the house. Dean and Susan scour newspapers, magazines, and books for

messages. When they find a quotation worthy of becoming sign fodder, they print it out on a strip of white paper and save it for future use.

A stack of future signs sits paper-clipped on Dean's desk, near the windows on which they will someday appear. There are quotes from Will Rogers, Joan Didion, Donald Trump, Tom Stoppard—even Nicole Kidman. Signs usually change every month, though Dean says

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

Neighborhood Brings in the Harvest Festival

Oct. 22 Fair Hosts 5 Bands, 60 Booths, and 2 Costume Parades on 24th Street

By Laura McHale Holland

The first-ever Noe Valley Harvest Festival—a combination street fair, county fair, and small-town bazaar—is expected to draw hundreds of fairgoers to 24th Street on Saturday, Oct. 22. Jointly sponsored by the Friends of Noe Valley and the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, the festival will coincide with the Merchants' annual hayride, so look for horses clip-clopping through "Downtown" Noe Valley as well.

The action will be centered on 24th Street between Church and Sanchez streets from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. "The events and entertainment we have planned are very exciting," says co-organizer Richard May. "We're going to have five bands on the Sterling Bank stage at 24th and Church streets, which we also refer to as the Main Stage. And more entertainment will be at what we call the West End at 24th and Sanchez streets."

Chinese lion dancers will kick things off on the Main Stage at 10:30 a.m. Next up, at 11 a.m., will be 5150, a band of middle-aged psychotherapists playing classic rock. They'll be followed at noon by the country rock group They Call Me Lucky. A kids costume parade takes place at 12:45 p.m., and a dog costume parade at 1 p.m. If your dog can howl or do tricks too, you can enter him or her in the pet tricks contest at 2 p.m.

Other bands appearing on the Main Stage will be the Shut-Ins, an acoustic combo, at 1:15; the Sippy Cups, incorporating audience participation, puppets, and unicycles into classic psychedelic rock, at 2:30 p.m.; and Groove Team, doing West Coast swing and blues at 4:30. (Advance sign-up for the costume parades and dog-howling contest is highly recommended. E-mail sara@nvharvestfestival.com.)

According to May, most of the fair's exhibitors and entertainers are local. There will be over 40 booths showcasing juried work by local artists and craftspeople, and about 20 more representing neighborhood schools and organizations. And there will be activities aplenty: a stroller obstacle course (sans babies, of course) sponsored by Pasta Pomodoro at 3:45 p.m., a treasure hunt in and out of stores all along 24th Street from noon to 4 p.m., an enormous Twister Game (a '60s-era contortion game), a Biggest Slug Contest, San Francisco firefighters with their firetruck, juggling, bellydancing, a "punkin" patch and pumpkin decorating contest, a raffle, and a sidewalk drawing contest sponsored by Just for Fun.

The Noe Valley Farmers' Market, selling organic fruits and vegetables, will be

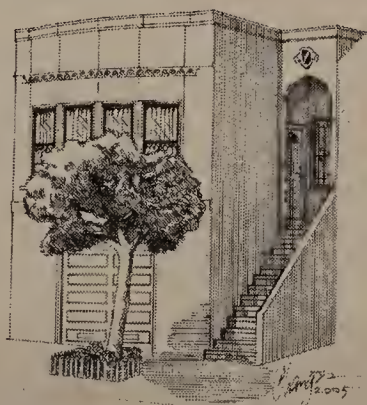
CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Remembering the Rose. As October brings an earlier darkness and thoughts of harvest are overshadowed by the clouds and chill pouring down from Twin Peaks, it may be helpful to remind ourselves that the light of summer days will return, and with them, the rose.

Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

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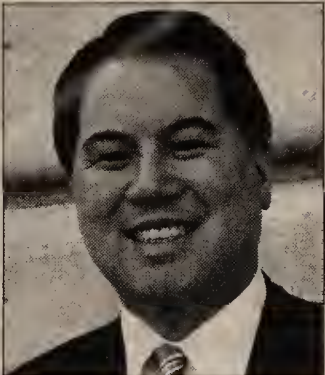
Noe Valley Democratic Club



November 8 Election Endorsements



Treasurer
José Cisneros



Assessor
Phil Ting



City Attorney
Dennis Herrera

The Noe Valley Democratic Club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street.
Upcoming programs include forums on the "San Francisco Democratic Party and the Local Left" (Oct. 5) and "Stem Cell Research: The Promise, The Hype, and the Reality" (Nov. 16).
For more information contact Rafael Mandelman at rafaelmandelman@yahoo.com or Andy Fleischman at andy@ffrst.com.

Prop A	Community College District Bonds A Worthwhile Investment in a Precious Public Asset	Yes
Prop B	Street and Sidewalk Improvement Bonds Restore Our Public Infrastructure	Yes
Prop C	Ethics Commission Budget and Outside Counsel Ensure Fair Enforcement of Our Ethics Laws	Yes
Prop D	MUNI Reform Give the Neighborhoods a Voice at MUNI	Yes
Prop E	Election Date of Assessor-Recorder and Public Defender A Sensible and Noncontroversial Adjustment of the Election Calendar	Yes
Prop F	Neighborhood Firehouses	No Position
Prop G	Access to Underground Parking at Golden Gate Park A Reasonable Proposal, With Broad Support Across the Political Spectrum	Yes
Prop H	Firearm Ban	No Position
Prop I	Military Recruiting	No Position

Prop 73	Waiting Period and Parental Notification Protect Teens. Protect Choice.	No
Prop 74	Teacher Probation Stop Arnold's Vindictive Attack On Our Teachers	No
Prop 75	Public Employee Union Dues Don't Let the Republicans Silence Our Teachers, Firefighters, Police and Nurses	No
Prop 76	State Funding and School Funding Limits Tell the Governor to Keep His Hands Off Education Funding	No
Prop 77	Schwarzenegger's Re-Districting Measure Do We Really Need MORE Republicans in Congress?	No
Prop 78	Big Pharma's Prescription Drug Measure Oppose This Misleading Effort To Divert Support from Proposition 79	No
Prop 79	Consumer Groups' Prescription Drug Measure Support Real Reform	Yes
Prop 80	Electricity Regulation The Ideologues Had Their Chance; Let's Not Go Back	Yes

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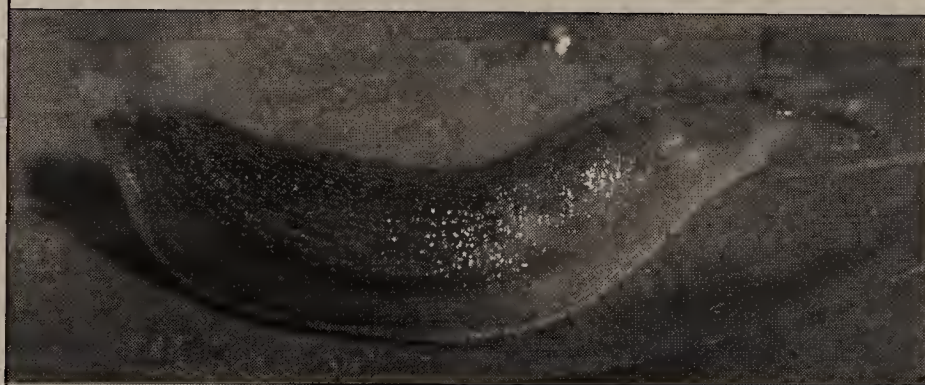
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11:00 am - 11:45 am
5150 - Classic Rock

12:00 noon - 12:45 pm
They Call Me Lucky - Americano & cauntry Rock

12:45 pm - 1:00 pm
Kiddie Costume Parade
Sign up with soro@nvharvestfestival.com

1:00 pm - 1:15 pm
Dog Costume Parade
Sign up with soro@nvharvestfestival.com

1:15 pm - 2:00 pm
The Shut-Ins - "Hulabilly" Rack

2:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Howl at the Moon & Other Dog Tricks Contest
Sign up with soro@nvharvestfestival.com

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm
The Sippy Cups - Classic psychedelic rack

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Contest & Raffle Winners Announced

4:30 pm - 5:30 - 6 pm
Groove Team - West-coast swing & blues

West End Performance Area (24th of Sanchez)

10:30 am / 12:30 pm / 2:30 pm
Greg Frisbee (Comedy Juggler)

11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Annual Merchants & Professionals Hayride

12:00 noon - 4:00 pm
24th St. Treasure Hunt

3:45 pm - 4:30 pm
Pasto Pamodoro Stroller Obstacle Course
Sign up with soro@nvharvestfestival.com

2:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Zephyr Real Estate Punkin' Patch
& Pumpkin Decorating

2:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Artery Monster Twister

2:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Community Art Project
Draw & Decorate Your Own Hond Turkey

2:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Guerrero Street Gardens' Contests & Demos

and a few surprises!

Artists

Vincent Atos Vincefoto
Suson Bistline
Dono Boykd Fused Glass Creations
Liso Churton Baby Jak
Lyn-Clor Elom Studios of Lynn-Clor
Kothy Dybeck Fogbelt Studio
Greg Gowlowski
Greg Gowlowski Photography
Jonet Gersonde Jon's Beers
Down Roth Golden Down Roth Designs
Alesho Green
Irene Hendrick Irene Hendrick Pointings
Patrick Herms PH Photography
James Christopher Hobbins
Fire Goat Gallery
Berit Holms Berit Designs
Corrie Hultberg Full Moon by C
Jonel Jones Abe Jones Designs
Joyce Jordon Rock Party
Morie Kelzer Paper Arts
Tessa Kemp
Judith Kloin
Mork Leory
Tonyo Lewis
Deborah Maciel Chic Cosos
Margaret Morano
Jim Myrick
Gerry O'Brien GWADE Jewelry
Christy Ostler Oxume
Mary Podillo Hot Tamale Arts
Kristen Ponti Vivan
Lise Poulsen Designs on Your Heart
Shannon Ronge Silent K' Designs
Glorio Rodriques
Jennifer Rose Jennifer Rose Designs
Nancy Schwob enee Fabric Design
Jacqueline Thompson
Jacqueline Thompson Ceramics
Jean Thompson Podaobumps
Tevyo Tufford Sirius Designs
Gretchen Walker
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David Wong Art Art Home

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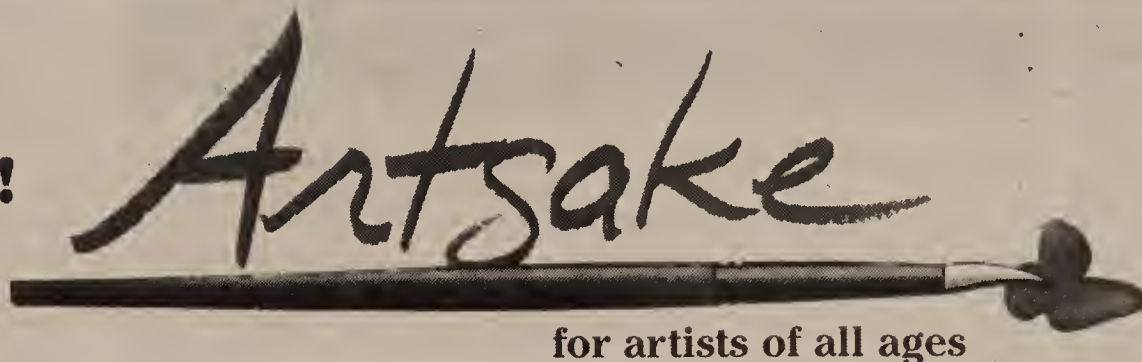
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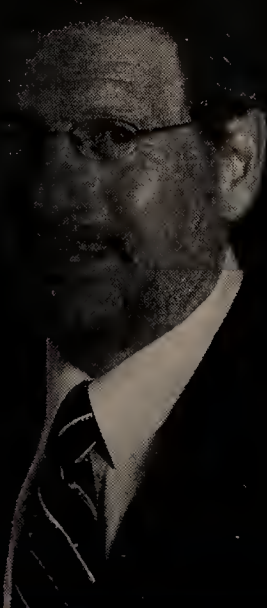
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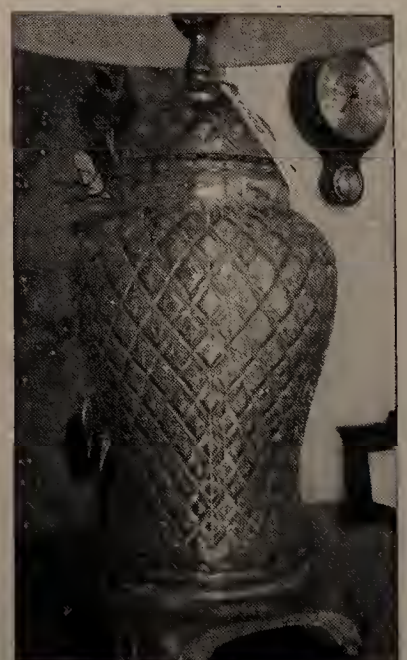
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The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and manuscripts, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned manuscripts will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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CO-PUBLISHERS/EDITORS
 Sally Smith, Jack Tipple

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS AND EDITORS

Olivia Boler, *Last Page Editor*

Laura McHale Holland, *Associate Editor*

Karol Barske, *Calendar Editor*

Corrie M. Anders, Heidi Anderson, Rosie Ruley
 Atkins, Valeria Vegas, Sue Cattoche, Helen Colgan,
 Suzanne Herel, Liz Highleyman, Florence Holub,
 Jeff Kaliss, Doug Konecky, Laura McCloskey, David
 Mois, Bob Oaks, Erin O'Brian, David O'Grady,
 Peter Orsi, Elliot Poger, Roger Rubin, Tom Ruiz,
 Lorraine Sanders, Karen Topakian, Kate Volkman

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Pamela Gerard, *Photo Editor*

Beverly Sharp, *Senior Photographer*

Jan Brittonson, Najib Joe Hakim, Leo Holub,
 Charles Kennard, Ken Newman

PRODUCTION

Jon Elkin, Sally Smith, Jack Tipple

ILLUSTRATION

Karol Barske

WEB DESIGN

Elliot Poger

ADVERTISING SALES

Steve Steinberg, *Advertising Manager*

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LETTERS 37¢

Mollie Stone's Too Expensive

Editor:

The sale of Bell Market to Mollie Stone's or a similarly high-priced grocery store would be somewhat of a disaster for seniors, the disabled, and others living on fixed incomes who do not drive or who have limited mobility. If Bell does indeed vacate its 24th Street location, high-end grocery chains should be discouraged from moving in. What the neighborhood needs is a Safeway, Albertsons, or other reasonably priced supermarket.

John Hirschberger

26th Street

A Housing Project—That's the Ticket!

Editor:

I see from the *Voice* that the Cala/Bell stores are for sale ["Ralphs Looking for a Buyer for Bell Markets," September 2005]. So, we must make sure that our priorities as a society are met in selecting a replacement.

Seeing our reaction to the Home Depot big-box situation, it is easy to conclude that a supermarket is unneeded and anti-competitive against the small mom-and-pop stores, so we must reject it. What we need is low-cost housing. Therefore, the city should buy Bell Market for projects, with the ground floor devoted to public parking. This would have the benefit of bringing diversity to Noe Valley, as well as more teenagers to provide companionship to our children.

So many progressive goals met with one change of use!

James Keefer

Guerrero Street

Neighborhood Activists Should Get Off Their Soapbox

Editor:

With the ongoing two-year Real Food debacle firmly entrenched in Noe Valley culture, nothing has struck me as clearly as the 'anti-business mentality' of many residents who presume to speak for all of us. Although it seems likely that Fresh Organics Inc./Real Food Company fired its workers without cause (and let them be punished for it), I fear this was simply a catalyst for neighborhood—and other city—activists to pursue their own social goals at the expense of local businesses.

In a neighborhood with extremely high business rents, an unforgiving margin causes rapid turnover for many small businesses. And with the antiquated restaurant moratorium, they cannot be helped by increased foot traffic from new establishments, which could attract a fresh clientele. Now, with self-aggrandizing threats of boycotts and lawsuits, under the nebulous concept of "social justice," no one seems willing to attempt to really resolve the Real Food issue, meanwhile becoming all the more belligerent in their anti-business rhetoric. Supervisor Bevan Dufty, to his credit, did try to resolve this, but I currently see no difference between the dogmatic stances of the recalcitrant Real Food Company and the Noe Valley neighbors.

One may expect this behavior from a company whose job it is to maximize profits, but what are the neighbors up to? It is curious that the organizers of the successful farmers' market are the most boisterous supporters of the status quo of no Real Food (read: boycott threat). And for

many people, buying food at a farmers' market has even more status than buying from a local organic produce store. Hey, I like that bluegrass band, too, but I'd surely trade it in for a healthy and diverse business community. Finally, this issue has sadly become a platform for those with ideological problems with the very concept of business.

This mess could likely be settled if the two sides' attorneys sat down to work out a settlement and/or a compromise with the backing of the community. Just get it done. I'm guessing Real Food wants a way out as well, but now it's become a battle of wills. Yet I've seen little evidence from many Noe Valley residents (and to some extent the *Noe Valley Voice*) that a compromise is a desired outcome.

Instead, I often hear the poorly defined words "principle" and "justice," which are generally used to stifle debate. So be it, but I hope the view of the empty store from the moral high ground is a good one, while other local businesses down below suffer in this difficult climate.

David Latterman

Fair Oaks Street

A Hamlet for Omelets

Editor:

I found myself walking up Powell Street, past Union Square, at 9 a.m. one recent weekend. The streets were thronged with discontented-looking tourists. These people obviously had money burning holes in their pockets, but no place to spend it. The only things open were a few restaurants (with long lines), the cable cars (lines around the block), and a Walgreen's. The tourists must have been in the habit of waking up at 6 or 7 a.m., and had found themselves at loose ends.

Businesses sometimes hold a late closing day. Why not an early opening day? If I owned a business or restaurant in Noe

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Valley, I would try to club together with others to open at 8 or 9 a.m. one day a week. Once enough people signed up, they could promote this to the tourists by talking to hotel concierges and leaving flyers at the hotel desks. They might even attract some early-rising locals.

"Take the historic F streetcar and explore a charming San Francisco neighborhood," the flyers could read. "Eat a leisurely breakfast, then fit in some early morning shopping." Then they could list the businesses and restaurants and give their hours and specialties, with a map and transit instructions.

Noe Valley is a great place to shop, and I think this might really catch on, with tourists telling other tourists about this way to make their vacations more fun. If the experiment were a success, the merchants could print up a fancy advertising booklet and really promote their businesses.

Merrill Sanders
Church Street

Fair Warning of CBD

Editor:

In a letter published in the September *Noe Valley Voice*, Mr. Harry Aleo complained about an alleged lack of notification to property owners as the Community Benefit District was being formed. The facts completely contradict his claim.

The steps and timing of the CBD formation process were as follows:

1. Research into the feasibility of a Noe Valley CBD began in October 2004, with a survey mailed to *all* property owners in the potential CBD district. The *Noe Valley Voice* reported on this in the October 2004 issue. The survey responses showed a very high level of support in what the CBD would do and a willingness by those property owners in the district to pay for it.

2. Based on the survey, a public hearing was held and the Board of Supervisors voted to support a petition drive for a CBD. The petitions were mailed to *all* property owners in the district in March 2005, with complete details outlining the costs and the benefits. Under state law (Prop. 218) governing this type of property tax assessment, only property owners can vote, and the voting is weighted based on the property size and amount assessed. Again, during this phase of the process a large majority of property owners who responded expressed their support for the CBD.

3. As a result of the favorable petition drive, ballots were mailed, again with complete details, to *all* affected property owners in May 2005, with a 45-day deadline to return the ballot. At least 50 percent of the affected property owners had to vote to validate the election. Again, the *Noe Valley Voice* did an extensive article

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on the process in the June issue, which, ironically, was also the issue featuring Mr. Aleo and his famous horse, Lost in the Fog.

4. On Aug. 2, 2005, with more than 65 percent of the affected property owners voting, a public hearing was held, and the ballots were opened and counted. The weighted majority of the property owners voted yes, and the formation of the CBD was approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Contrary to what Mr. Aleo wrote, the property owners who will pay for the investments made through the CBD received three separate mailings and had numerous other opportunities through this paper as well as articles in the *Chronicle* and *The Examiner* to learn about the CBD. The voter turnout was 65 percent, and of those voting, the weighted voter support was 57 percent in favor.

It doesn't get any more democratic than that.

Debra Niemann
Former President,
Friends of Noe Valley
Founding Community Member,
Noe Valley CBD

A Street Person Who Touched Many Lives

Editor:

I currently live in Las Vegas, but recently lived for a year with my sister Leslie Scott on 24th Street. I fell in love with Noe Valley, and would still be there if I could afford to live in San Francisco.

When I lived in Noe Valley, I met a friend of hers and of many Noe Valley residents: Jesse, an apparently homeless Vietnam veteran, who was a mainstay in the neighborhood on his cement bench on 24th Street.

LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com.

Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Jesse Zele died in early September, and my sister tells me his bench filled up with flowers and notes from the neighborhood [see story, front page]. Jesse befriended everyone, loved everyone, accepted everyone, appreciated everyone.

Though he was homeless at times, crippled, and dying, he personified the saying, "Stop and smell the roses." He was loved, and will be missed.

When I lived in the neighborhood in 2001, I noticed him one rainy day on his bench as always, water streaming down his face. I picked up an umbrella at the drugstore and gave it to him, but I had trouble getting him to accept it. Other Noe Valley residents had done the same, he said, but he kept losing the umbrellas because they would be stolen when he'd walk away from the bench.

I sat and talked with him for a while—watching the activity on the street with him, as he did all day every day—and was inspired to write this poem:

JESSE IN THE RAIN

Heads down,
we rush past each other,
wet, 24th Street strangers.

From his bench
our Noe Valley homeless one
greets us, each one,
inquiring after our cats
and our children
by name.

—Sidney Scott
© 2001

Crying "Racism" Avoids Real Issues

Editor:

I am writing in response to a letter in the September issue regarding the controversy over the Green Cross medical marijuana club on 22nd Street which basically said that the reasons the neighbors were protesting the club were "racist."

Is the writer saying that those in more modest-income neighborhoods care less about crime or children's safety? A cry of "racism" is a last-ditch provocative slur some people use when they don't want to delve very deeply into an issue.

Neighbors living near the club, who, interestingly enough, include Asian, black, and Latino residents, have voiced their concerns because the club is not abiding by its permit requirements. Its clientele have caused disruption with speeding cars, open resale of the marijuana outside the club, and smoking and loud music coming from inside the club. The area has experienced an increase in break-ins. The club has driven out the operators of an adjacent long-term hair salon.

Neighbors are particularly concerned about these problems occurring in a location that is sited within one block of a school which also serves as a location for an after-school program for low-income youths. There are two additional middle schools within two blocks of the club.

Accusations of racism are serious charges. Using the term indiscriminately just to get a reaction is inexcusable.

Kim Stryker
Fair Oaks Street



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Ready for the Next Earthquake?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

steps you can take to prepare yourself, your family, and your community. For comprehensive preparedness tips and a list of recommended emergency supplies, see the city's web site at www.72hours.org.

Before, During, and After

With recent events in the gulf states fresh in our minds, there's no better time to prepare for an earthquake or other natural or man-made disaster.

- Make an emergency plan for yourself and your household. Pick a place outside your home to reunite, and identify an out-of-state emergency contact. Discuss your plan with your children. Think about how you will care for your pets. Review your plan and conduct drills each year. Learn the disaster plans of your employer and your children's school.

- Put together an emergency kit containing water (one gallon per person per day) and food for at least three days, flashlights, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit and important medications, blankets, spare clothes and sturdy shoes, pet supplies (food, leash, carrier), cash (including coins for pay phones), hygiene supplies, work gloves, tools, garbage bags, duct tape, and other basic supplies to get through the first 72 hours. Keep emergency supplies at home, at work, and in your car (and keep your gas tank at least half full).

- Learn when and how to shut off gas, water, and other utilities, and have the necessary tools on hand. Keep an "ABC" fire extinguisher in an accessible location and learn how to use it. Make sure smoke detectors are in working order and replace batteries regularly.

- Make copies of important documents (including IDs, prescriptions, insurance information). Store one set in your emergency kit and another at a secure location outside your home.

- During an earthquake, if you find yourself indoors, stay there. Drop to the floor, take cover under a sturdy table or desk, hold on, and protect your head with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, and tall furniture. Do not use elevators. If you're outdoors, move to an open area away from buildings, trees, and power lines. If you're driving, pull over in a safe area away from overpasses and power lines. Stay in your car until the shaking stops.

- Afterwards, be prepared for aftershocks. Check for gas and water leaks. If you detect damage, turn off the gas and report leaks to PG&E. Check your home for cracks and other damage using a flashlight, not candles or matches. Listen to the radio (KCBS 740-AM) for news and instructions. Avoid driving, to keep streets clear for emergency vehicles.

NERT Gets You Ready

One of the best ways to learn basic disaster preparedness and response skills is to take the Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) training. NERT was established by the SFFD after the Loma Prieta Earthquake in 1989; since

then, an estimated 12,000 city residents have taken the training, including some 2,000 in Noe Valley.

The 20-hour training includes earthquake awareness, hazard mitigation, basic fire suppression, utility shutoff, light search and rescue, emergency triage and disaster medicine, terrorism issues, and team organization and management. The final class gives trainees the opportunity to put their skills to the test by extinguishing small fires, searching a simulated disaster scene, and treating volunteer "victims."

In the event of a disaster, NERT members are asked to gather at their neighborhood staging area to help with the larger rescue and recovery effort. Noe Valley's staging area is at James Lick Middle School at Noe and Clipper streets.

Next Training in December

The next training for residents of Noe Valley, Fair Oaks, the Mission, and Potrero Hill will begin on Dec. 3, and will run for three consecutive Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Classes will take place at the SFFD Division of Training at 2310 Folsom Street. A full schedule of upcoming trainings, as well as the class curriculum, can be found on the NERT web site at www.sfgov.org/sffd/nert.

In lieu of a fall drill this year, the Noe NERT team will have a booth at the Noe

Valley Harvest Festival on Oct. 22.

"Do it for yourself," urges Noe Valley NERT coordinator Maxine Fasulis. "It doesn't cost anything but a little time, and you'll walk away with a whole lot of information and skills." □

Noe Valley Struts Its Stuff at Harvest Festival

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in full swing until 1 p.m., and the hayride will be loading and unloading passengers, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 24th and Sanchez streets—not at the Walgreen's parking lot as in previous years.

"We've planned a small, two-block fair in order to keep costs low for our vendors and sponsors and to keep the festival in line with the spirit of Noe Valley itself, as its own little 'town' in a big city, and with a focus on our small, local merchants, and being a place that welcomes kids of all ages and pets," says fair co-organizer Sara Butz. "We aren't selling either food or beverages because we want our neighborhood's restaurants, cafes, and bars to reap the business from the festival."

For those who ride bikes to the festival, there will be free valet service at 24th and Vicksburg streets monitored by the S.F. Bicycle Coalition. If you must drive, parking will be available at the James Lick Middle School lot (near 25th and Castro streets) for \$5.

A complete schedule of events and more details on the entertainers, artists, and sponsors can be found at www.nvharvestfestival.com. Many volunteers are still needed to help with final preparations and at the festival itself. Interested? Call Richard May at 206-0231. □

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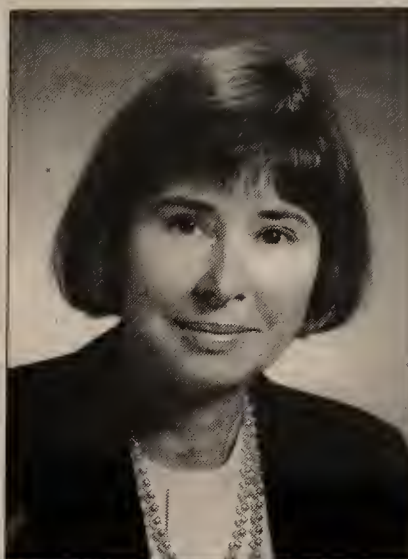
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Flowers and Candles Fill 'Jesse's Bench'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and his work ethic, and his relentless refusal to give in to self-pity. Zele never asked for anything, and was reluctant to take gifts or ask for favors.

Not long after he began his 20-year tenure on the bench, Kay Lamming noticed him washing windshields and offered him work cleaning the windows at Cotton Basics, the store she managed at the corner of Castro and 24th streets. Zele continued to do odd jobs for merchants and neighbors for the next two decades, including light construction, mowing lawns, painting, and picking up newspapers for vacationing neighbors.

According to his good friend Bill Spivey, his name was really Jess Ezelle, but the many postcards mailed by globe-trotting Noe Valleyans to him in care of Lamming's store were addressed simply to "Jesse Zele." His friends across the street at The Peaks bar described him as "very private, very proud, and always very positive."

Longtime 28th Street resident JoAnn Boatwright often helped him carry his groceries home and sometimes cooked for him. She recalls that Zele was very spiritual and hoped to travel to India someday. When they celebrated his birthday on Aug. 21 of this year, he told her he was happy he had lived to be 60 years old.

Glen Evans looks up from the shopping cart he pilots down 24th Street to recall that, many years ago, he used to hear Zele playing flamenco guitar at the Old Spaghetti Factory on Green Street. Zele was a very good performer, having traveled to Spain to study the instrument,



As news spread of Jesse Zele's death, friends along 24th Street left notes, photos, and mementos on the concrete bench that was his favorite stopping place. Photo by Pamela Gerard

Evans says. He points to a copy of *The American Legion* magazine, which someone has left with the candles and flowers on the bench, and says, "He loved to read that." The name on the magazine's address label is that of Jesse's friend Harry J. Aleo, of Twin Peaks Properties on 24th Street.

Local composer Ramon Sender could see that Zele's health was deteriorating, but says, "In typical Jesse fashion, he made light of his own aches and pains, and was more interested in what was going on in my life. Jesse and I frequently discussed meditation and yoga.... Jesse was a very special, very loving person," Sender adds. "I always thought that children must have seen him as a kind of fairytale character, because he had a certain magic about him. Noe Valley will be poorer for his loss."

Carol Yenne, a 30-year resident of Noe Valley and owner of Small Frys, the shop

across the street from Zele's bench, takes exception to people who characterized him as "homeless." She knew that the respect and generosity of Noe Valley neighbors had provided him with shelter and necessities for many years. "He wanted to continue to have the lifestyle he had chosen, which included daily conversations on his bench with people in the neighborhood, odd jobs, and regular visits to the two bars within a block of his bench. The people of Noe Valley were caring towards Jesse. He was a part of the community."

A note left on Zele's bench by "Terry and Leapin' Lizzie" captures the feeling: "The last time I saw you, you told me that you had become so bent over you couldn't walk without crutches and that you couldn't find ones small enough, and then a friend had called you up to say she had found a pair of children's crutches in her basement. 'Ain't I lucky?' you said with

a big smile. You were a flower of a man."

Olivier Delerm and his wife, Sarah, often entertained Zele as a dinner guest at their home. The couple also included him on road trips to the coast and to Napa and Calistoga.

Olivier Delerm recalls the time Jesse fell in love. "The woman was from Missouri and he'd met her in Noe Valley. He went to visit her twice. It was quite an adventure. Without proper ID, Jesse could not get a flight ticket, so I dropped him off at the Greyhound station, got him a ticket, and tried to make sure he would remember not to miss the connections for the three-day trip! Jesse talked about his cross-country adventures for a long time."

Delerm has a more recent memory, one that touched him deeply. "Last time I saw Jesse, two weeks before he died, he asked if Sarah and I were planning to have children soon. I told him I was sure this was going to happen, and he said with a tear in his eye, 'I'd love them to call me Uncle Jesse.' When Sarah and I have children, we will tell them stories of Uncle Jesse."

More than 150 people told their stories at the Noe Valley Ministry on Sunday, Sept. 25, as the Rev. Keenan Kelsey led a memorial service celebrating Zele's life. Bill Spivey brought Zele's worn black beret, a poem he had written when his brother died, and photos of Jesse Zele as a handsome young man playing the guitar. The photos and the poem are currently on display in the window of Cotton Basics. □



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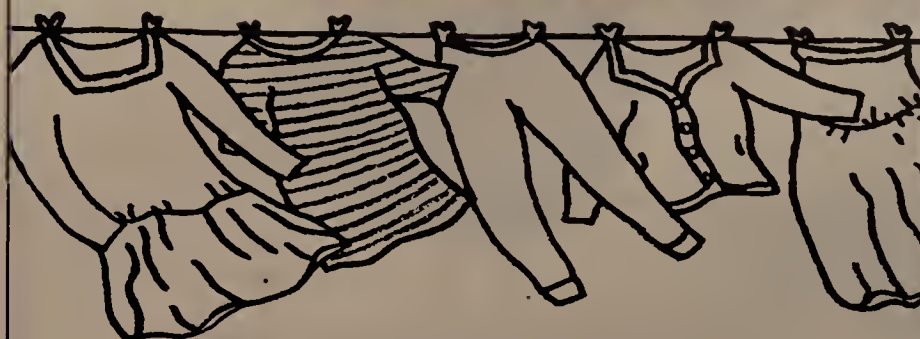
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Signs of the Times On Church Street

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

he sometimes switches them twice a month.

Of course, he can only do that on *his* months. Two years ago, Susan stepped in to claim her right to sign space.

"She exercised her equal power and said, 'I want every other month for my signs,'" Dean says in mock defeat.

"[It's] because he gets all the credit," Susan, an author and artist, says with a grin. For years, she says, she's been known as the woman who's married to the man in the window. But their frequent debates have long fueled the sign tradition.

Her husband thinks the current arrangement has more to do with a conflict between politics and philosophy. His favorites are political signs. She'd rather stick to the philosophical.

"Susan thinks [my political signs] are a little harsh. I think they are kindly provocative. Plus, we live in a city that is Democratic, so I don't get any rocks

through the window," he chuckles.

The two do agree on one thing.

"We do have a rule that we don't get into religion," Dean says. "We're not out here as crusaders. We're here to give people something to think about as they walk by or wait for the trolley."

Over the years, the Bistlines' messages have prompted some Noe Valley residents to do a lot more than think. Many smile, wave, and give Dean the thumbs-up signal when he's sitting by the window. Others have tapped on the glass and wanted to chat about the messages. Some have even dropped their own suggestions for signs in the Bistlines' mail slot.

After posting the quote "Leap, and the net will appear," which they discovered in Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*, the Bistlines say a young couple knocked on their door and handed them flowers. The young couple explained that they had been wrestling with tough life choices, and the short phrase in the window helped them make their decision.

"They decided to get married. And they decided to move out of San Francisco," says Dean.

Susan, who grew up in Mexico City

and speaks fluent Spanish, says she once noticed a Latino woman coming every day to copy down the phrases. She went outside to speak to her and learned that the woman was using the sentences to practice her English.

Another time, the couple went to take their dog, Charlotte, in for overnight boarding. A man working at the kennel recognized Dean as "the man in the window" and gave him a 50 percent discount on the services.

One of Dean's favorite slips of white paper hasn't yet made it to the windows. He's saving four little phrases, entitled "Rules of Life's Road," for his five children, 11 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. They are:

Go with your heart.

Be kind.

When in doubt, do.

Forgive and forget.

There's only one little problem, according to Dean: "I say, if you don't forget, you can't forgive. But she [Susan] says you can forgive, but you can't forget."

They're still debating about who's right. □

A Few Lines from the Bistlines

A fanatic is one who won't change his mind and won't change the subject.

—Winston Churchill

Don't worry about what people think. They don't do it very often.

—Author unknown

War is the violent rejection of words in favor of weapons.

—90-year-old man from Dubai speaking to journalist John Cory

Leap, and the net will appear.

—John Burroughs

A patriot must always be ready to defend his country from his government.

—Edward Abbey

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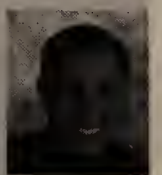


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The Cost of Living in Noe

And You Thought Gas Prices Were High

By Corrie M. Anders

A house sale that soars past \$2 million in Noe Valley can still work up a pretty good buzz at the neighborhood cocktail party. And there has been plenty to talk about these days.

In August, two homes sold for at least \$2 million. It was the fourth month this year that homebuyers had broken the \$2 million barrier to claim a choice piece of real estate in the neighborhood.

A four-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath home in the 600 block of 28th Street, between Diamond and Douglass streets, held bragging rights as the most expensive. Buyers paid \$2,115,000 for the 3,200-square-foot home, according to sales data supplied monthly by Zephyr Real Estate.

A five-bedroom, 4 1/2-bath home in the 100 block of Hoffman Avenue, between Alvarado and 23rd streets, was a close second, selling for \$2.1 million.

The two pacesetting deals were part of Noe Valley's molten real estate market, which saw 15 homes close escrow in August—two more than in August of last year. Eight of the 15 homes cost \$1 million or more.

Buyers also picked up keys to nine condominiums, including one that cost nearly \$1.4 million. The pricey condo, in the 4000 block of 25th Street between Noe and Sanchez streets, has three bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, and nearly 2,000

square feet of living space.

The vigorous condo and detached-home sales reflect a real estate market that has been going gangbusters for the better part of the decade. Low mortgage interest rates have kept buyers enthusiastic, even in expensive and highly competitive Noe Valley. "There are still multiple offers, and still many offers over asking price," says Randall Kostick, sales manager for Zephyr's 24th Street office.

The strong demand for homes showed up clearly in the August stats, he says. Homebuyers paid an average of 16 percent more than the sellers' asking price. They also closed escrow in a relatively short period, averaging 27 days.

A dearth of homes for sale contributed to the feeding frenzy, Kostick says. But he adds that more properties have come on the market this fall and there could be more available in October, when our summer vacation season is officially over.

"There is clearly increased inventory," says Kostick. "Buyers are clamoring for more properties, and now they're coming on the market."

The larger supply could provide shoppers with "more choices" and "a better possibility" of getting the property they want, he says.

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
August 2005	15	\$800,000	\$2,115,000	\$1,247,533	27	116%
July 2005	24	\$750,000	\$2,279,000	\$1,258,037	21	115%
August 2004	13	\$638,000	\$1,558,888	\$1,107,838	34	116%
Condominiums						
August 2005	9	\$610,000	\$1,395,000	\$903,333	25	117%
July 2005	7	\$775,000	\$1,210,500	\$1,030,500	38	108%
August 2004	10	\$590,000	\$1,155,000	\$833,500	24	110%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
August 2005	4	\$950,000	\$1,501,600	\$1,264,150	33	116%
July 2005	4	\$1,190,000	\$2,279,000	\$1,706,000	45	108%
August 2004	8	\$927,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,244,625	45	112%
5+-unit buildings						
August 2005	0	—	—	—	—	—
July 2005	2	\$1,700,000	\$1,900,000	\$1,800,000	57	107%
August 2004	0	—	—	—	—	—

* Sales figures include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. In this survey, Noe Valley is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The Voice thanks Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) for supplying the data. NVV 10/05

A Snapshot of Noe Valley Rents**

Type of Unit	Number in Sample	Range of Rents September 2005	Average Rent September 2005	Average Rent August 2005
Studio	5	\$1,000 – \$1,450	\$1,200 / mo.	\$1,149 / mo.
1-bedroom	17	\$ 850 – \$2,200	\$1,575 / mo.	\$1,588 / mo.
2-bedroom	22	\$1,650 – \$3,600	\$2,502 / mo.	\$2,359 / mo.
3-bedroom	10	\$2,600 – \$4,200	\$3,545 / mo.	\$3,274 / mo.
4-bedroom	4	\$3,200 – \$6,000	\$4,613 / mo.	\$6,200 / mo.

** This survey was based on a sample of 58 Noe Valley listings appearing on www.craigslist.com Sept. 9–14, 2005. The previous sample of 55 listings was collected Aug. 12–17. NVV 10/05

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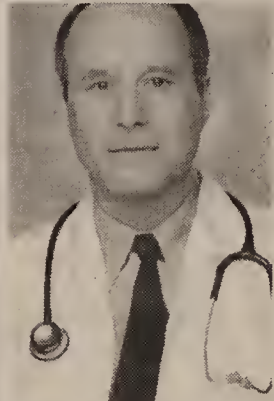
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Senior Center to Raise Lunch Money—at the Pritikin Mansion

By Heidi Anderson

Noe Valley resident Helen McKenna, 89, rarely misses her Tai Chi Chuan class. "I'd go every day if they had it that often," she says with a laugh.

McKenna is among the more than 4,000 Bay Area residents who make use of the 30th Street Senior Center each year. They can get lunch for a suggested donation of \$1.50, enjoy an array of free classes—from quilting to Western line-dancing—and even have their hair done at the center's beauty salon.

The center, whose goal is to keep seniors independent, is run by On Lok Day Services, and shares the red brick building at 225 30th Street near Dolores Street. It's open six days a week and every holiday. Program director Valorie Villela says a majority of the center's seniors are low-income and do not have family nearby. "It's important that we be open on those days—most of our seniors say this is their second home."

The senior center, which turned 25 last year, gets just half of its budget from the city, and must rely heavily on fundraising from the community.

This year, former advertising mogul Bob Pritikin has offered his mansion at 47 Chenery Street as the venue for the senior center's biggest fundraiser, on Sunday, Oct. 23, from 1 to 4 p.m. Partygoers can get an up-close look at Pritikin's palatial home while bidding on an array of prizes at a silent auction and raffle.

Among the prizes and auction items are gift certificates from local businesses



Seniors enjoy lunch and a garden walk at the 30th Street Senior Center. Photo by Jorge Santis

such as Common Scents, Firefly, Swatdee, and Incanto Restaurant. Lucky donors may also win San Francisco Symphony, Giants, and airline tickets.

Denise Perrier and her band will perform live jazz, and attendees will be served a barbecue lunch and drinks.

Admission is \$75 per person in advance (\$50 for seniors) and \$100 at the door. Raffle tickets will be \$2 each.

The Friends of 30th Street Senior Center, a group that is helping to organize the event, hopes to raise \$20,000. "The party will support the terrific things that are being done for and with seniors at this wonderful place," says Friends of 30th Street member Vicki Rosen.

"It's a great party," agrees Dave Baker, of On Lok. "It's a good cause, it's a good way to support your neighbors—we're all going to be old someday."

To find out about advance ticket sales, call Baker at 292-8732, or stop by the 30th Street Senior Center booth at the Noe Valley Harvest Fair Oct. 22.

Halloween Party Postponed, But Sweet Adelines to Sing for the Library Oct. 29

By Laura McHale Holland

The Halloween closing party neighbors were planning for the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library has been postponed because nobody knows exactly when the library's last day of operation will be. "The earliest the branch will close for renovation is Halloween, but it's more likely to close in mid-November," says Mindy Linetzky, the San Francisco Public Library's bond program manager. "The project is out to bid, and we're encouraging contractors to submit their bid packages to work on this historic gem."

Not to worry. Postponed doesn't mean cancelled. Kim Drew, co-chair of the Noe Valley Library Campaign (which is raising funds for the library's interior fixtures, such as furniture and computers), reports, "We're definitely planning something fun to give people a chance to say goodbye, to celebrate what's been and what the library will be in its new form."

The branch on Jersey Street, an Andrew Carnegie library built in 1916, is set to undergo a seismic retrofit, as well as improvements to the Children's Room and other interior spaces. The building also will be brought into compliance with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).

During the two years the branch will be closed, the lapsits and other children's programs will be held on Wednesday mornings at Upper Noe Recreation Center. The library also will park a bookmobile in front of St. Philip's School, 665

Elizabeth Street, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. These interim services are slated to begin four to six weeks after the library shuts down.

Meanwhile, the fundraising campaign is picking up speed. According to Drew, people have been extremely generous.

"It's going great. Our goal is \$150,000, and we've got about \$65,000 raised to date. We had another very successful event in July hosted by B.J. Droubi and her associates, and they presented us with a substantial check from the entire office. We'll also be at the Harvest Festival Oct. 22," she adds. "We'll have a raffle and all kinds of activities for children, and, of course, we'll be taking pledges for the campaign."

Singing Librarian Brings Harmony

A week later on Saturday, Oct. 29, a women's "barbershop" harmony group called SF Sound Wave (a local chapter of the Sweet Adelines) will give a benefit concert at St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond Street near 24th Street.

The entire neighborhood is invited to attend the musical fundraiser, "which will feature our own singing librarian Carol Small," says Drew. (Small is the longtime children's librarian at the Noe Valley branch.) "Most of us didn't even know she belonged to the [Sweet Adelines] until at the end of a Friends of the San Francisco Public Library meeting, Marian Chatfield-Taylor noticed a treble clef pin on Carol's lapel and asked her if she was a musician. The fundraiser concert idea developed from there."

The concert will take place from 3 to 5 p.m., and all proceeds will benefit the library. The suggested donation is \$15; children under 12 admitted free. For more information on the Sound Wave event, contact Marian Chatfield-Taylor at 626-7512, ext. 103. For the latest scoop on fundraising, call Kim Drew at 643-4695.

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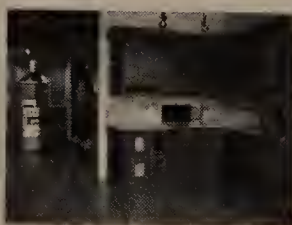


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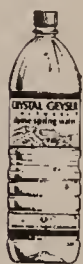
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Ellen Is Into Art More Than Ever Now

And You Can See Her Paintings at Open Studios Oct. 22-23

By Corrie M. Anders

Not long before her mother died, Ellen Into got some sage parental advice: Stop dabbling and get serious about your artwork.

That was almost two decades ago. At the time, Into was just starting out a dual career in San Francisco as a clinical psychologist and a real estate agent.

But get serious she did. Today, Into is a locally recognized painter whose canvases hang in the homes of collectors and small businesses, and fill the 24th Street storefront that doubles as her studio/gallery and real estate office.

Into will be among 700 fine artists—both emerging and established—who will showcase their original works at locations around the city each weekend during the month of October.

San Francisco Open Studios is sponsoring the free visual event, which will also include at least 16 Noe Valley locations, where art lovers can view and purchase everything from paintings and sculpture to photographs and jewelry.

Noe Valley's studios will be open during the weekend of Oct. 22-23. Artists in the Castro, Duboce, Mission, Glen Park, Bernal Heights, Eureka Valley, and Diamond Heights neighborhoods also will open their doors the same weekend. (For the complete list of artists, go to www.sfopenstudios.com or pick up a map at Bell Market, Phoenix Books, Cover to

Cover, or other locations around the city.)

Open Studios is celebrating its 30th anniversary in San Francisco, and Into has participated in many of the exhibitions. Her paintings were mostly on display at a studio in Hunters Point until last year, when she switched her Open Studios viewing location to 24th Street.

Into, 72, is a frail, soft-spoken woman who shows off her artistic strength in oil splashed across large canvases. She primarily paints portraits and still-life flowers—the latter usually in vivid, energetic colors. Her style, according to Into, is influenced by Bay Area Expressionism, which she describes as “somewhere between realism and abstract...with the emphasis on the colors and the emotional feeling.”

Into comes from an artistic family. Her mother, who died in 1986, was an art student in New York who engaged her children in painting. She also had the kids fashion art made from objects they scavenged at local junkyards.

“We’d have informal shows for ourselves out of things that came from the dump,” Into recalls.

Into says her mother encouraged her to



Ellen Into's works, such as this 2000 oil painting “Lilies II,” are hung in many San Francisco homes and businesses.



Noe Valley realtor Ellen Into will join more than 700 artists in exhibiting their paintings, sculpture, photography, and handmade jewelry in Open Studios in October.

make art a more meaningful part of her life. “I think she saw something. I promised my mom, ‘I’m going to be serious about it.’”

Following in her mother’s footsteps, Into has passed her artistic flair to two of her three children—one is a painter and the other is a sculptor.

Into has taken art classes off and on over the years. “It was catch as catch can,” says Into, who picked up her real estate license in 1979 and a psychologist license in 1983. Never one to cease learning, Into still studies at Fort Mason, which offers art classes for seniors.

Today, her 24th Street studio/gallery is filled with dozens upon dozens of painted canvases—some hung on the walls but many stacked up around the room. “There are more at home,” she says.

Into has sold a number of her works in the \$1,500 range to collectors. Her paintings start at \$250, however, and are mostly sold to buyers who want artwork to decorate their homes. Into also has reproduced her paintings on postcards that sell for \$1.

Into doesn’t work as hard outside the studio as she once did. She’s semi-retired as a psychologist and has tried to step back from real estate, “but people keep calling me up.”

But she has no immediate plans to give

Noe's Walk-In Galleries

Close to two dozen Noe Valley Artists will open their doors on Saturday, Oct. 22, and Sunday, Oct. 23, as part of San Francisco Open Studios, a citywide art show celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Below is a partial list of the local artists who will welcome visitors from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days. For information on all 700 artists displaying their work on weekends in October, go to www.sfopenstudios.com or call 415-248-1909.

Kelly Dinglasan, 3875 20th St.
painting

Ellen Into, 4207 24th St.
painting

Josephine Iselin, 601 Diamond St.
photography

Kimberley Jones, 4236 25th St. #10
painting, drawing

Eda Kavin, 3838 19th St.
painting, watercolor

Mark Madsen, 462 30th St.
sculpture, fiber

Michael Markowitz, 3747 23rd St.
drawing, sculpture, painting

Renato Martinez, 4244 23rd St.
painting

Chris Mende, 1255 Sanchez St.
photography

Nancy Otto, 863A Elizabeth St.
glass, sculpture

Ben Pax, 272 Jersey St.
painting, drawing

Henry Sultan, 1698 Sanchez St.
painting, drawing

Jenny Sultan, 1696 Sanchez St.
painting, mixed-media

Augusta Talbot, 1055 Church St.
sculpture, mixed-media, drawing

Cecilia Welden, 935 Sanchez St.
mixed-media, painting

Yvonne Williams, 3674 22nd St.
photography, furniture

up the brush and canvas. “I’m still prolific,” she says, looking around her crammed gallery, “as you can see.” □



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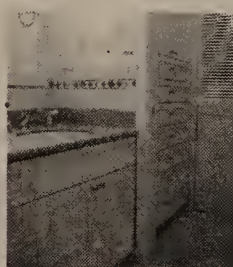
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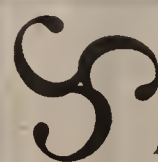
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SHORT TAKES

Who's Left on the Left?

People of all political persuasions are invited to attend a panel discussion on Wednesday, Oct. 5, which will explore the past, present, and future of "The San Francisco Democratic Party and the Local Left." The event is sponsored by the Noe Valley Democratic Club.

Bay Guardian editor Tim Redmond, former Board of Supervisors president Matt Gonzalez, professor Richard DeLeon, and Democratic Party activist Debra Walker will be on the panel. DeLeon is the author of *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991*, as well as the founder of San Francisco State University's Public Research Institute.

The discussion will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street between 23rd and Elizabeth streets. For more information, e-mail Rafael Mandelman at rafaelmandelman@yahoo.com.

Mysteries and Martinis

Join the authors of the *San Francisco Noir* anthology at the San Francisco Mystery Bookstore on 24th Street for a meet-and-greet with martinis and appetizers co-hosted by City Lights Books. The collection showcases local literary writing about the dark side of San Francisco, including editor Peter Maravelis and contributors David Corbett, Eddie Muller, Jim Nisbet, Robert Mailer Anderson, and Kate Braverman, among others.

"Nearly everyone in the book is a San Francisco writer," says Mystery Bookstore owner Diane Kudisch. "Eddie Muller does a lot of film noir and writes about the dark ladies of film noir. He wrote two mysteries that take place in the forties in San Francisco."

Kudisch says the other contributors also are experienced mystery or noir writers. The editor and authors will sign books and chat up their fans on Wednesday, Oct. 12, at 7 p.m., at 4175 24th Street near Diamond Street. For more information, call the bookstore at 282-7444.

Farmers' Market Plays Fair

"Fair trade" is a term lots of merchants are bandying about, but consumers aren't always sure what it means. Come meet Fatima Ismael Espinoza, manager of an all-women fair trade coffee cooperative in Nicaragua, at the Noe Valley Farmers' Market on Saturday, Oct. 15.

She'll be there to provide information on fair trade, and local merchants may also provide free samples of fair trade coffees, according to market co-founder Vanessa Barrington. Espinoza is working in collaboration with Transfairusa, an Oakland-based non-profit that acts as a third-party certifier for fair trade products sold in the United States.

The Noe Valley Farmers' Market features both organic and conventional produce, nuts, sweets, and meats, as well as musical entertainment, and takes place every Saturday from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. on 24th Street between Vicksburg and Sanchez streets.

They're Baaaaaack!

On a cold, dark, and foggy night in September, under the door of the *Noe Valley Voice* office blew a press release from beyond, or at least from the Friends of Hoffman, an ephemeral group under the spell of the Haunted House Lady, a.k.a. Marilyn Lucas.

"For our annual Halloween haunt this year, we're planning an outdoor dining party with all of our monster friends," the

mysterious flyer read. "Trick-or-treaters may drop by for a bite on Monday, Oct. 31, from 6 to 8 p.m."

The exact address of the Haunted House was left blank, but children were asked to follow the breadcrumbs to the creepiest cottage on Hoffman Avenue between 24th and Elizabeth streets. "Look for a witch's brew stirring in a giant cauldron, and watch out for the haunted car—a 1967 Dodge from Dead Man's Curve."

Last year, more than 300 kids went through the Hoffman Haunted House, and we think they all survived. (After all, the Haunted House Lady, 285-6265, is the founder of the "fun and safe" Halloween tradition in Noe Valley.)

For more information, dig up a Ouija board.

Make the Rec Center Shine

Pitch in to keep a neighborhood park pretty by joining neighbors and helpers from the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department for a cleanup day at Upper Noe Recreation Center, at Day and Sanchez streets.

"The project was prompted by somewhat disgusted parents," admits event organizer and Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center member Karen O'Connell Mackey. She thinks the rec center needs spit and polish on a regular basis. "We hope to get a commitment out of this from Rec and Park to have a better maintenance schedule, even if it involves volunteers."

For this month's project, volunteers are needed to help with cleaning up the rec center's indoor floor, clearing out broken or outdated toys, raking the sand outside, and removing graffiti.

If you'd like to participate but can't make the date, Mackey says she would welcome donations of water, juice, or snacks for the work crew, estimated at 40 to 50 people. Gloves, garbage bags, and other tools will be provided. The event takes place on Saturday, Oct. 15, from 9:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.

To sign up for cleaning or refreshments, e-mail Mackey at k.mackey@kocopublishing.com.

Living the Lesbian Dream

Find out everything you've wanted to know but were afraid to ask about money, insurance, and sex, at a series of events for lesbians planning their golden years, at the Women's Building, 3543 18th Street near Valencia. All events in the series take place from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

According to spokeswoman Betty Sullivan, the series will provide information specifically geared for lesbians, and "will address our need for what we call in the healthcare context 'comfortable care.'" But don't think only retired folks are welcome. "My sense is that the series will be beneficial for lesbians who are already retired, but also for those in early- or mid-career years who are thinking ahead and planning for the future," Sullivan says.

On Wednesday, Oct. 5, a panel of insurance experts presents "Insuring My Future: What Insurance Coverage Do I Need?" Later in the month, financial coach Claire Lachance leads "Creating My Path to Financial Well-Being," an interactive workshop on building prosperity, on Wednesday, Oct. 19. Tickets are \$12 each.

The finale for the series will be "Hot! Sparking and Sustaining Your Sexuality," a presentation by sex educator, erotic entertainer, and co-founder of the Center for Sexuality and Culture Dr. Carol Queen. Tickets are \$40 for this event, which takes place on Wednesday, Oct. 26.

To order tickets, call 431-1180, ext. 7, or visit www.womensbuilding.org and use the "other" donation amount to enter prices for the tickets you wish to buy.

SHORT TAKES CONTINUES ON PAGE 25

SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN!

Noe Valley Filmmaker Brings Craigslist to the Big Screen

By David O'Grady

The Internet may be the latest refuge for writers waiting out an episode of writer's block, but for filmmaker and Noe Valley resident Michael Ferris Gibson, it became the inspiration for his new documentary, *24 Hours on Craigslist*. Screened at the San Francisco Independent Film Festival earlier this year, the movie will have its local theatrical debut at the Red Vic Movie House on Haight Street Oct. 7 to 17.

Gibson had bogged down writing a screenplay for another movie when as a diversion he went to Craigslist, the popular San Francisco-based web site, which serves as a community bulletin board for classified ads, personals, and other listings.

As he waded through Craigslist's sea of postings—which are largely uncensored—Gibson became intrigued by the extraordinary glimpse into people's lives that the site afforded. "It was part sociology, part anthropology, and entertaining as hell," he says. "That experience was everything a good movie should be."

From that spark, Gibson set out to capture some of the stories behind the postings, with a few guidelines set by Craigslist founder Craig Newmark to protect the site's users: Gibson could only use postings from a single day—which ended up being chosen at random—and only from posters who volunteered to be interviewed for the movie.

Even with those limits, Gibson wound up with 121 stories and nearly 200 hours of footage. For his 85-minute documentary, Gibson has assembled stories that are poignant, funny, pathetic, and downright funky, including an Ethel Merman impersonator looking for a new bass player and drummer, two drugged-out guys hosting a sex party where no one shows up, and a massage therapist who jokes that his porn star/producer/actor resume is a gay "cliché."

With so much material, Gibson is also putting together a DVD of *24 Hours on Craigslist* with expanded and additional stories, which will be available sometime next year.

It took Gibson eight film crews to make *24 Hours on Craigslist*. How does an independent filmmaker find the resources he needs to make a movie? By posting to Craigslist, of course. "Within two days," Gibson says, "my mailbox was filled with almost 300 people to be on the crew."

The documentary *24 Hours on Craigslist* is playing Oct. 7–17 at the Red Vic Movie House, 1727 Haight Street. Director Michael Ferris Gibson will be at the 7:15 p.m. shows on Oct. 7, 8, and 10.

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SHORT TAKES

African Children's Choir Performs

The Watoto Children's Choir, a group of Ugandan children orphaned by AIDS and war, will present a concert of gospel, traditional African rhythm, and ethnic dance at 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 28, at Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore Street at Jackson Street.

According to Noe Valley resident Joe Beyer, who is a member of the church, this performance is part of the choir's world fundraising tour. The 16 performers in the group are being housed by Calvary families during their stay in San Francisco.

Admission is free; donations are encouraged and will be used towards the work of the Watoto Children's Ministries, which works to help some of the 1.7 million Ugandan children orphaned by war and AIDS. For more information about the concert, call 346-3832.

City Guides' Scavenger Hunt

Nope, San Francisco City Guides isn't some big company making a pot of money squiring tourists around San Francisco. Rather, the non-profit, which is affiliated with the San Francisco Public Library, offers free walking tours 52 weeks a year to residents and tourists alike who want to learn about the history, architecture, legend, and lore of the city. The Urban Scavenger Hunt, coming up on Sunday, Oct. 16, is the annual fundraiser that allows S.F. City Guides to continue its work.

Teams of participants will enjoy a four-hour street theater event combining an exploration of the haunts of the (original) 49ers, interactions with characters from the city's past, and riddles about San Francisco's past and present. The event starts at Theatre 39 on Pier 39 at 12:30 p.m., and ends in the same place at 5 p.m. Check-in is at 11 a.m., and participants can form their own teams or join one at the event. The tax-deductible registration is \$40 per person. More details are online at www.sfcityguides.org.

A Shadowy Production

Longtime Noe Valley resident Larry Reed has been busy in his Chattanooga Street studio preparing for the latest offering of ShadowLight Productions, a contemporary shadow theater that integrates traditional Balinese shadow theater techniques with American theater and film styles.

Called "A Gathering of Gamelans" and co-produced with the renowned Balinese group Gamelan Sekar Jaya, it is a two-week performance series running Thursdays through Sundays, Oct. 13 through 23, at Cowell Theatre in Fort Mason Center (Buchanan Street and Marina Boulevard).

Dating back to the 13th-century Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, gamelan music is a form that employs bronze gongs, chimes, drums, flutes, bowed and plucked string instruments, and sometimes singers. In shadow theater, actors, puppeteers, and dancers cast shadows on a screen, creating a dream-like moving picture.

The Fort Mason series, much like a festival, will feature more than 70 local and international musicians and performers, and will showcase the music, dance, and shadow theater of Java, Bali, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand. A highlight will be the premiere of *A (Balinese) Tempest*, a reinvention of the classic Shakespeare play, running Oct. 19 to 23, at 8 p.m. (2 p.m. on Sunday).

Tickets are \$15 to \$20 and are avail-

able through the Fort Mason box office at 345-7575. For more information, contact ShadowLight Productions at 648-4461 or visit www.shadowlight.org.

Writing a Novel?

You can join an exciting lineup of experienced novelists on Sunday, Oct. 16, from 5 to 8 p.m., in a seminar and panel discussion on writing and publishing a novel hosted by 826 Valencia Writing Center. Not only will participants discuss the joys and pains of writing novels, they'll also address contacting agents, working with magazines and publishing houses, and other publishing issues.

Panelists include Andrew Sean Greer, author of *The Confessions of Max Tivoli* and *The Path of Minor Planets*; Bharati Mukherjee, author of the National Book Critics Circle Award-winning *The Middleman and Other Stories*, as well as numerous other novels; Michelle Richmond, author of *Dream of the Blue Room* and the forthcoming *Ocean Beach*; and Rabi Alameddine, author of *Koolaid* and *I, the Divine*. Stephen Elliott, author of *Happy Baby* and *A Life Without Consequences*, will moderate.

Admission is \$100. Proceeds from the seminar will go toward programming for kids and young adults at 826 Valencia.

To sign up, go to www.826valencia.org or visit the storefront at 826 Valencia Street near 19th Street. Questions? E-mail seminars@826valencia.com.

Poll Workers Needed

Do your civic duty and earn some cash, too. The San Francisco Department of Elections is taking poll worker applications for the Tuesday, Nov. 8, state election. The department is offering stipends of \$112 for clerk positions and \$155 for inspector positions.

Applicants must be United States citizens, age 18 or older, and registered to vote in California. San Francisco high school students age 16 or older with a grade-point average of 2.5 or better may also apply. People who aren't citizens of the U.S. are encouraged to apply to work as translators.

For more information, visit www.sfgov.org/election or call 554-4395.

Tour of Painted Ladies

If you've ever wanted to step inside the homes on "Postcard Row," also known as the Painted Ladies of Alamo Square, you'll have a chance on Sunday, Oct. 16, between 1 and 5 p.m. The Victorians are part of the 2005 house tour and fundraiser sponsored by Victorian Alliance of San Francisco.

Also in the tour will be restored residences on Grove Street and in Hayes Valley, and a Gothic Revival church. All structures in the tour were built between 1871 and 1895. Architectural styles include Queen Anne, San Francisco Stick, Italianate, and a smattering of Second Empire and Classic Revival.

Tickets are available during the tour for \$25 (\$20 students or seniors) at 824 Grove Street near Fillmore, where the tour will begin. The tour covers a relatively compact but significantly sloping area, so comfortable shoes are highly recommended. A van will also be available.

Proceeds support the Victorian Alliance, a nonprofit, volunteer organization devoted to the appreciation and preservation of significant architecture in San Francisco. The primary beneficiary of this year's tour will be restoration of the "Granite Lady," San Francisco's old U.S. Mint building. For further details, see www.VictorianAlliance.org or call 668-5502.

This month's Short Takes were written by Erin O'Briant and Laura McHale Holland. All phone numbers are in the 415 area code.

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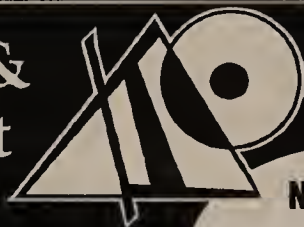
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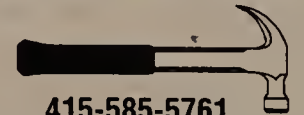
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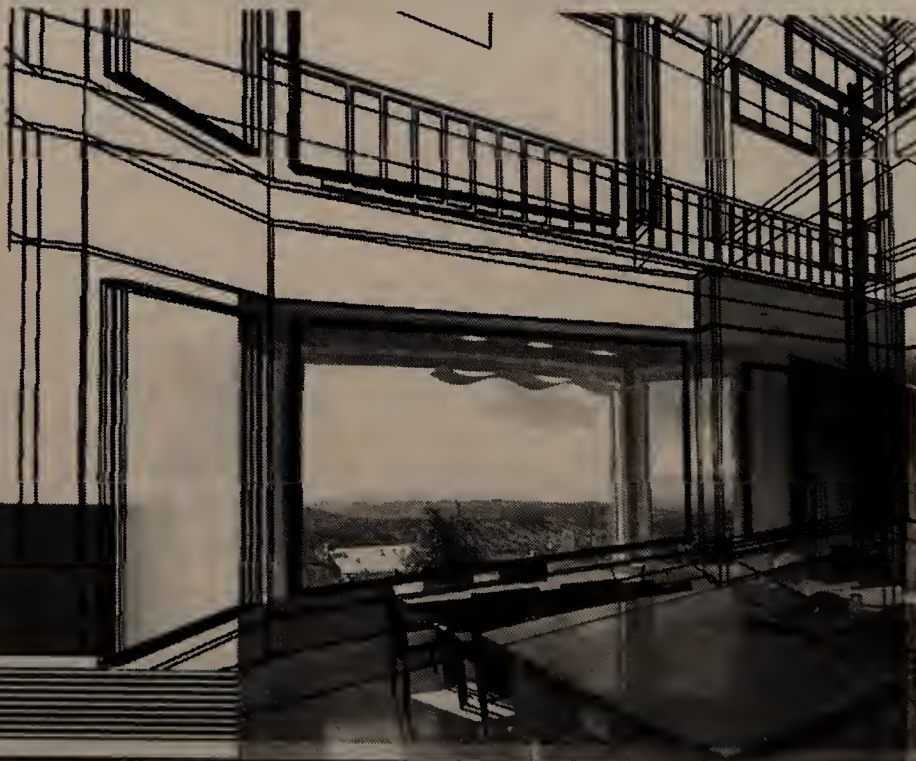
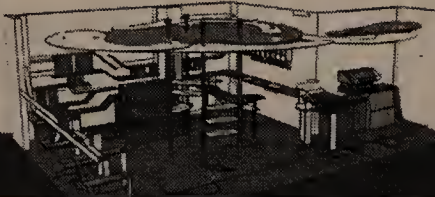
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Nina Youkelson, with a young friend.

Preschool Parties For a Grown-up Cause

By Laura McHale Holland

This month the Noe Valley Cooperative Nursery School is celebrating two things: its longevity as a community resource for parents and children, and the 70th birthday of its director, Nina Youkelson, who has been at the school's helm since it opened in 1969.

A year and a half of planning has gone into creating two complementary events. The first, an evening fundraiser, will be held Saturday, Oct. 8, from 6 to 10 p.m., at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street, where the preschool is located. All are invited, and all proceeds from the evening, including the \$75 admission charge, will benefit the fund for Youkelson's eventual retirement.

"The need for funds is simple: In the 36 years of Nina's work at the school and life in the community, insufficient attention was paid to the fact that she will someday retire. The alumni committee is trying to ensure that when she does decide to hang up her sequined sneakers she can retire comfortably," says parent-alumna Elizabeth Crane (*see essay at right*).

The second gathering will be a family festival and potluck picnic for the school's current membership, alumni, neighbors, and wider community, on Sunday, Oct. 9, at Douglass Park at Douglass and 26th streets, from 1 to 5 p.m. This event is free. Entertainment is planned, and people are asked to bring a dish to share. For more information about the festivities or to lend a hand, please call event organizer Sharon Lepper at 415-826-7647.

Where Would We Be Without Nina?

By Elizabeth Crane

I was working part-time and staying home with my sons when they were little. My neighbor, Ed Shuck, would see me out pushing a stroller and chasing a toddler and say, "Hey, you should check out the Noe Valley Nursery School. Your kids would love it."

But no, I was broke and stubborn, trying to do everything myself without family or a village, or even a large cohort of friends with babies. While my husband was at work all day, I was flying solo.

I had to practically stub my toe on the school before I admitted what Ed had known all along: the Noe Valley Nursery School was my place. In 1997 I wandered in and I never left. I felt instantly adopted.

The co-op was inexpensive compared to any other school I'd seen because it required "sweat equity": the parents worked at the school. Everything I believed about how kids learned—at their own pace, in their own way—was reinforced here. Everything I needed to learn (and there was plenty) was taught here—by the parents, by the kids, and of course by the director, Nina Youkelson.

Nina made nursery school a welcoming place. Her habit of saying good morning by name to everyone who walked in—parent and child—was one that never failed to cheer me. Each day, I looked forward to hearing "Good morning, Michael! Good morning, Elizabeth!"

If a child was upset about being left at the school, Nina offered her lap—and consolation. She'd say, "Your mommy will be back after lunch. It's OK, to be sad, but there are a lot of things to do here. What would you like to do?" Within minutes, the tears would be dry and there would be one more kid at the dress-up boxes or racing around on a trike.

In a situation that to some looked like anarchy—lots of kids jumping and screaming, others painting with wide splashes of color at the easels, still more marching through wearing fancy costumes—Nina was the quiet eye of the storm, participating in every piece of the big picture, but letting it all happen and swirl around her, too.

Everyone who passes through the school has at least one favorite Nina story. I use mine as a reminder to be generous with my kids, especially with my time:

One day in school, a child came up to Nina and said, "They won't let me play with them." (It doesn't matter now which child or which year this happened; it happened over and over, and Nina knew what to do.)

"Come with me," she said, taking the child by the hand and walking outside to where a group of kids were digging in the sand. "Nicholas wants to play with you," she told the children. "He's at your door and he's knocking and saying, 'Can I come in?' What are you going to do?" The kids in the sand were momentarily silent. Then Nina continued with a smile, "You let him in! He's at your door, so you say, 'Come in! Come in and play!' When a friend knocks at the door, you say, 'Come in!'"

Nina is modest. She would say that the commemoration of her 70th birthday (Oct. 16) is merely a coincidence and that the October 8–9 gala and potluck (*see story at left*) are really about community and the school. But we parents know better: Nina has been the heart and soul of the school for 36 years, and we honor her for every minute she has put into making our children's lives and our lives richer. Happy Birthday, Nina. We love you.

Elizabeth Crane lives on Eureka Street with her husband Richard and sons Philip, 12, and Michael, 9. She is the co-author, with Sharon Chandler, of Say Yes to College, published by Penguin Perigee in August.

THANK YOU, NOE VALLEY

The Noe Valley Nursery School Alumni Committee gratefully acknowledges the following businesses, organizations, and individuals for their generous donations to the Nina Youkelson Fundraiser and Birthday Celebration October 8. If you would like to join them in contributing to the retirement fund for our beloved school director, please contact Sharon Lepper at 415-826-7647.

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Come help us celebrate
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OCTOBER 2005

Oct. 1 & 8: LAPSITS at the Noe Valley Library feature songs and stories for infants, toddlers, and their parents. 10:30 am. 451 Jersey St. 355-5707.

Oct. 1-Dec. 17: The San Francisco CHILDREN'S ART CENTER offers Saturday classes, featuring a range of media, for ages 9 to 12. 9:30-11:30 am. Dolores Park Clubhouse. Register at 771-0292.

Oct. 3-31: Chris Sequeira leads classes in TAI CHI. Mon. and Tues., 6 pm, at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.; Wed. and Fri., 10:15 am. Call 415-773-8185 or 650-756-6857 for location.

Oct. 5: The Noe Valley Democratic Club hosts a PANEL DISCUSSION, "The San Francisco Democratic Party and the Local Left," featuring Tim Redmond, Matt Gonzalez, Richard DeLeon, and Debra Walker. 7-9 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. rafaelmandelman@yahoo.com.

Oct. 5: The Bird & Beckett BOOK CLUB discusses Yann Martel's *The Life of Pi*. 7 pm. 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

Oct. 5, 12, 19, 25; Nov. 1 & 8: Natural Resources offers a CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION class from 7 to 9:30 pm. 816 Diamond St. 550-2611.

Oct. 5, 19 & 26: WORKSHOPS for lesbians "planning for the golden years" include a discussion of insurance Oct. 5, tips from a financial coach on Oct. 19, and a sexuality seminar led by Carol Queen, Ph.D., on Oct. 26. 6:30-8:30 pm. Women's Building, 3543 18th St. 431-1180, ext. 17.

Oct. 6: A COMMUNITY MEETING to discuss renovation of Upper Noe Rec Center focuses on a revised layout of the dog play area and proposed artwork by Troy Corliss. 6-8:45 pm. Day & Sanchez. 581-2546.

Oct. 6-19: Dara Chieco exhibits CERAMIC SCULPTURES at Ruby's Gallery. Reception Oct. 7, 6:30-9:30 pm. 552A Noe St. 558-9819.



Susan Arthur and Regina Faustine are among the practicing doulas holding open house every second Saturday from 2 to 4 pm at Natural Resources on Diamond Street.

Oct. 6-27: Chris Fernie leads QIGONG classes on Thursdays, 6:30-8 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 305-4692.

Oct. 7-28: Theresa Garcia leads ROSEN METHOD movement classes. 8:30 am. Noe Valley Ministry, Upper Studio, 1021 Sanchez St. 812-9917.

Oct. 8: Misner & Smith performs BLUEGRASS, folk, and rock from 10:30 am to 1 pm. Noe Valley Farmers' Market. 24th Street at Sanchez. 695-9299.

Oct. 8: "Meet the DOULA" at Natural Resources the 2nd Saturday of the month. 2-4 pm. 816 Diamond St. 550-2611.

Oct. 8: A book party for *San Francisco's POTRERO HILL* introduces Peter Linenthal and Abigail Johnston's photographic history from Arcadia Press. 3-5 pm. Potrero Branch Library, 2626 20th St. 355-2822.

Oct. 8: LITQUAKE at Modern Times Bookstore features readings about travel by authors from Seal Press, founded in 1976 to provide a forum for feminist issues. 6:30-7:45 pm. 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

Oct. 8: FILM NIGHT in Mission Dolores Park features the comedy *Tootsie*, starring Dustin Hoffman. 8 pm. Dolores & 18th. 453-4333.

Oct. 8 & 9: Celebrate NINA YUKELSON's 70th birthday at a gala party at the Noe Valley Ministry on Sat., Oct. 8, from 7 to 10 pm, and at a family celebration in Douglass Park on Sun., Oct. 9, from 1 to 5 pm. 468-7077.

Oct. 9: The ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE hosts an open house and guided tour. 10 am-4 pm. 1345 Bush St. 775-7755.

Oct. 9: Celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with a BLESSING of your animal companions. 11 am. St. John the Evangelist Church, 1661 15th St. 861-1436.

Oct. 9: Brad Becker, director of the GBLT National Help Center, discusses local hotlines at the PFLAG SUPPORT GROUP meeting. 2 to 4 pm. St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church St. 921-8850.

Oct. 11: FILMS for children ages 3 to 5 include *Corduroy*, *Madeline*, and *One Was Johnny*. 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 355-5707.

Oct. 11: Celebrate the anniversary of JOHN LENNON'S birthday at a discussion of Elizabeth Partridge's new book, *John Lennon: All I Want Is the Truth*. 6:30 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

Oct. 11: Sarah Holmes discusses "Eight HERBS You Must Know," in a class at the Scarlet Sage Herb Co. 7-9 pm. 1173 Valencia St. 821-0997.

Oct. 12: The authors of *San Francisco Noir* sign books and drink martinis at 7 pm. San Francisco MYSTERY BOOKSTORE, 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

Oct. 13: St. Luke's Hospital trains VOLUNTEERS the second Thursday of the month from 3 to 5 pm. 3555 Cesar Chavez St. 641-6538.

Oct. 13: "Other Words," the fourth San

Francisco International POETRY FESTIVAL, features readings by Franck André Jamme, Greg Delanty, Chris Strofollino, and Miriam Van Hee. 7:30 pm. San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut St. 749-4507.

Oct. 13-16: OCTOBERFEST-by-the-Bay is a smorgasbord of German food, crafts, art, and traditional oom-pa-pa music. Thurs. & Fri., 5 pm-midnight; Sat., 11 am-11 pm; Sun., 11 am-7 pm. Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason. 888-746-7522.

Oct. 13-16 & 20-23: Noe Valley resident Larry Reed's SHADOWLIGHT THEATER puppet productions "A Gathering of Gamelans" and "A (Balinese) Tempest" feature the music of Gamelan Sekar Jaya. Cowell Theater, Fort Mason. 648-4461.

Oct. 14: Michael Chorost signs *Rebuilt: How Becoming Part Computer Made Me More Human*, his memoir about HEARING LOSS and a cochlear implant. 7 pm. Cover to Cover, 1307 Castro St. 282-8080.

Oct. 14-16: The Academy of Sciences hosts FREE DAYS for residents of the 94114 and 94131 zip codes; penguin feedings are scheduled for 11 am and 3:30 pm. 875 Howard St. 321-8000.

Oct. 15: Fatima Ismael Espinoza, manager of an all-women FAIR TRADE coffee cooperative, discusses her work. 8 am-1 pm. Noe Valley Farmers' Market, 24th at Sanchez.

Oct. 15: The 10th annual DOGGONE FUN RUN is a benefit for PAWS and the San Francisco SPCA. 9 am. Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park. 554-3007.

Oct. 15: CLEANUP DAY at Upper Noe Rec Center needs volunteers, 14 and up. Gloves, garbage bags, and other tools will be provided. 9:30 am-2 pm. Day & Sanchez. k.mackey@kocopublishing.com.

Oct. 15: A band called They Call Me Lucky performs original MUSIC and rock, country, folk, and blues at the Noe Valley Farmers' Market. 10:30 am-1 pm. 24th

Street at Sanchez. 695-9299.

Oct. 15: Open house at the TENANT UNION features music, an all-you-can-eat barbecue, a yard sale, and workshops. 11 am-4 pm. 558 Capp St. 282-6622.

Oct. 15: The Sit-Down READERS' THEATER performs *A Streetcar Named Desire* at 2 pm. North Beach Branch Library, 2000 Mason St. 355-5626.

Oct. 15: A benefit for the 15th anniversary of BREAST CANCER ACTION features musicians Holly Near and Adrienne Tori, comedian Rene Hicks, and author Anne Lamott. 6-11 pm. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission St. 243-9301.

Oct. 15 & 16: A CLOTHING DRIVE sponsored by the St. Paul's Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society needs donations of adult socks and new or good condition blankets. 221 Valley St. 648-7538.

Oct. 16: City Guides' URBAN SCAV-



ShadowLight Productions, directed by Noe Valley resident Larry Reed, will provide the sound for the Balinese shadow-puppet artistry of I Nyoman Sumandhi (above) on Oct. 13, 8 pm, at Fort Mason Center.

Noe Valley Chamber Music

Join us for our exciting 2005-06 Season!

October 23 - The Sun Quartet

Ian Swenson, Anna Presler, Anna Kruger and Andy Luchansky perform the music of Haydn, Brahms and Shostakovich.

November 13 - Empyrean Ensemble - "Culture Shock"

New music from around the globe with works by Tan Dun, Toru Takemitsu and Theo Oevendie.

December 11 - San Francisco Choral Artists

"A Medieval Christmas" including Britten's Ceremony of Carols with harp, and 9 contemporary works including 2 world premieres.

January 15 - David Tanenbaum and Friends

San Francisco's beloved guitar virtuoso performs the music of Boccherini, Beethoven and Kernis' 100 Greatest Dance Hits.

February 19 - Christine Brandes - "A Voice in the Valley"

This internationally acclaimed soprano performs a program of Hindemith, Bach and Stravinsky with violist Emily Onderdonk; cellist Tanya Thomkins and pianist Laura Dahl.

March 12 - Musica Pacifica - "Alla Rustica"

This audience favorite will perform Vivaldi, Marais, Ramaeau, Teleman, plus "rustic" music from Spain, Mexico and Scotland.

April 2 - Nadya Tichman in recital with Roy Bogas, piano

Ms. Tichman, SF Symphony Associate Concertmaster, debuts on our series with the music of Beethoven, Dvorak and Prokofiev.

May 21 - Season Finale

Maestro Donald Runnicles will join Opera instrumentalists Kay Stern and Thalia Moore performing Brahms, Mozart and Schubert.

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INGER HUNT covers the San Francisco's original shoreline, with street theater performances of local history. 11 am-5 pm. Meet at Theater 39 on Pier 39. 557-4266; www.sfcityguides.org.

Oct. 16: FIESTA ON THE HILL is an alcohol-free fundraiser for Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, featuring pony rides, a pumpkin patch, entertainment, and food. 11 am-7 pm. Cortland Avenue between Bocana & Folsom. 206-2140.

Oct. 16: A Victorian Alliance HOUSE TOUR shows off Victorians on "Postcard Row." 1-5 pm. Begin at 824 Grove St. 668-5502.

Oct. 16: "WRITING the Novel," a seminar for adult aspiring novelists, includes a panel discussion. 5-8 pm. 826 Valencia, 826 Valencia St. 642-5905.

Oct. 17: The ODD MONDAYS series features Elias Botto and Michael Roosevelt Katten discussing "An Evening of Shared Hope: Revisiting the September Camp Tawonga Jewish/Palestine Weekend." 7 pm. Co-host dinner at Noe Valley Pizza, 5:30 pm. RSVP to jlsender@webtv.net or call 821-2090.

Oct. 18: Ingleside Police Station holds its regular POLICE-COMMUNITY meeting starting at 7 pm. Ingleside Station, 1 Sgt. John Young Lane. 404-4000.

Oct. 18 & 25: Preschool STORY TIME, for children 2 to 5, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 355-5707.

Oct. 19: Community Care Licensing offers a CHILDCARE LICENSING orientation, 9 to 11:30 am, followed by a support workshop, 12:30 pm. Children's Council, 445 Church St. 343-3333.

Oct. 19: The ALIVE @ 9th Street film forum screens "HOME MOVIE Heroics." 7 pm. 145 Ninth St. 552-5950.

Oct. 21: Noe Valley resident JOSHUA DAVIS signs *The Underdog: How I Survived the World's Most Outlandish Com-*

petitions. 7 pm. Cover to Cover, 1307 Castro St. 282-8080.

Oct. 22: Sheila Malkind presents short FILMS that celebrate older women and their accomplishments at the Older Women's League (OWL) meeting. 10 am to noon. Call 989-4422 for location.

Oct. 22: The Noe Valley HARVEST FESTIVAL features 60 booths of art, craft, and local organizations, five bands, a stroller obstacle course, and a biggest slug contest. 10 am-6 pm. A hayride starts at 24th and Sanchez, 11 am-3 pm. 24th Street between Church and Sanchez. 206-0231.

Oct. 22: The Archer STRING BAND entertains shoppers at the Noe Valley Farmers' Market with tunes from the 1920s, '30s, and '40s. 10:30 am-1 pm. 24th Street at Sanchez. 695-9299.

Oct. 22: FAMILY FESTIVAL 2005 has a fun zone, an art zone, and non-stop entertainment. Mayor Gavin Newsom will attend from 1 to 2 pm. 11 am-3 pm. Yerba Buena Gardens, Mission between 3rd and 4th.

Oct. 22: The Noe Valley Music Series presents a CONCERT, "Slammin' with Keith Terry." 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

Oct. 22 & 23: Noe Valley artists are featured at San Francisco OPEN STUDIOS, along with artists in the Castro, Duboce, Mission, Glen Park, and Bernal Heights neighborhoods. 11 am-6 pm. For information, 861-9838; www.sfoopenstudios.com.

Oct. 22 & 23: Dancers perform TROLLEY DANCES along Muni's F-line, from 11 am to 2:45 pm, beginning at the McRoskey Mattress Company on the corner of Gough and Market streets. 267-4865.

Oct. 23: PET PRIDE DAY, sponsored by Animal Care and Control, features a pet costume contest, animal demonstrations, and vendor booths. 11 am-3 pm. Golden Gate Park, Sharon Meadow. 554-6364.

Oct. 23: A FUNDRAISER for On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center offers a tour of the Pritikin Mansion, a barbecue lunch, a raffle and silent auction, and live jazz by Denise Perrier and her band. 1-4 pm. 47 Chenery St. 292-8732.

Oct. 23: The SUN QUARTET performs works by Beethoven, Bartok, and Brahms at the Noe Valley Chamber Music program at the Noe Valley Ministry. 4 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 648-5236.



Works such as this "Jazz Piano" by Kelly Dinglasan will be on display at Open Studios, occurring in Noe Valley and surrounding neighborhoods on Oct. 22-23 (and elsewhere in the city on other weekends in October).

Oct. 25: The POLICE-COMMUNITY meeting at Mission Police Station begins at 6 p.m. 630 Valencia Street. 558-5400.

Oct. 25: Trina Lopez discusses San Francisco's lost cemeteries at a meeting of the San Francisco HISTORY ASSOCIATION. 7 pm. Mission Dolores School Auditorium, Church & 16th. 750-9986.

Oct. 25: The Eureka Valley/Harvey Milk Branch Library hosts a BOOK DISCUSSION about Gus Lee's *China Boy*. 7-8 pm. 3555 16th St. 355-5616.

Oct. 26-Nov. 16: Natural Resources offers a HYPNOBIRTHING class on Wednesdays from 7 to 9:30 pm. 816 Diamond St. 550-2611.

Oct. 27: DINE FOR A CHANGE, a benefit for San Francisco Women Against Rape,

includes restaurants Papalote, Tao Cafe, and Dolores Park Café. 861-2024, ext. 366; www.sfiwar.org.

Oct. 27: MARY GAITSKILL reads from her novel *Veronica* at 12:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

Oct. 27: Inanna Hazel leads a HERBAL workshop, including how to make a charm and candle magic. 7-9 pm. Scarlet Sage Herb Co. 1173 Valencia St. 821-0997.

Oct. 27: The UPPER NOE Neighbors meeting begins at 7:30 pm. Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 285-0473.

Oct. 28: The DAY OF THE DEAD exhibition at Precita Eyes Mural Arts honors founding artist Luis Cervantes with a *papel picado* party, live music, and *pan dulce*. 7-10 pm. 2981 24th St. 285-2287.

Oct. 28: The WATOTO CHILDREN'S CHOIR from Uganda performs a concert of gospel music and traditional African rhythm and dance. 7 pm. Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore St. 346-3832.

Oct. 29: The Noe Valley Ministry's FALL RUMMAGE SALE fundraiser offers things you never knew you needed at prices you can't resist. 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

Oct. 29: A FALL GARDENING workshop features planting, pruning, fertilizing, and pest-control techniques for the Bay Area. 10 am-1 pm. Garden for the Environment, Seventh Avenue at Lawton. 731-5627.

Oct. 29: FAMILY HALLOWEEN DAY at the Randall Museum features ghoulish games and creepy crafts. 10 am-2 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

Oct. 29: GRIZZLY PEAK performs traditional bluegrass music and harmony. 10:30 am-1 pm. Noe Valley Farmers' Market. 24th Street at Sanchez. 695-9299.

Oct. 29: SF Sound Wave, the local chapter of the SWEET ADELINES, gives a benefit concert for the Noe Valley Library; librarian Carol Small is one of the singers.

3-5 pm. St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond St. 626-7512, ext. 103.

Oct. 29: Make a Day of the Dead altar in a WORKSHOP for all ages led by Anita De Lucio-Brock. Noon. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. Call 355-2828 to register.

Oct. 29: Magic Dan performs HALLOWEEN MAGIC for all ages. Excelsior Library, 4400 Mission St. 557-4353.

Oct. 30: Walter Brents discusses the work of Russian symbolist author ANDREY BIELY. 4:30 pm. Bird & Beckett, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.

Oct. 31: There's a spooky HALLOWEEN party on Hoffman Avenue between Elizabeth and 24th Street—look for the witch's cauldron! 6-8 pm. 285-6265.

Oct. 31: It's Halloween in THE CASTRO, so please ride your broomstick, don't drive to Castro and Market. 6 pm—midnight. www.halloweeninthecastro.com.

Nov. 3: Tracie Hotchner, author of *The DOG Bible*, will discuss canine issues. 6-8 pm. Noe Valley Pet Company, 1451 Church St. 282-7385.

YES, NOVEMBER!

The next issue of the *Noe Valley Voice* will hit the streets on or before Nov. 1, 2005. The deadline for calendar items is **Oct. 15**. Please note that because of space limitations, Noe Valley events may take priority. Our address is *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or you may send an e-mail to Calendar Editor Karol Barske at calendar@noevalleyvoice.com.



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Noe Valley Faces



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Fifteen-year-old pug **Oliver** is an avid walker. Before health problems slowed his pace recently, he logged nine miles a day with owner **Kay Livingston**, who is known along Cesar Chavez Street as “The Pug Lady.” But you can’t keep this old dog down. He still gets out daily in his new stroller when Livingston, a professional dog-walker, strolls other pooches for their owners.

Livingston got into the pug biz back in 1989 when she was laid off from an IBM job and began going to Bay Area dog shows. She always loved dogs and soon realized they responded to her voice. In 1991, Livingston and Oliver helped initiate the Flat-Nose Soccer League in the East Bay—open to any dog as long as it had a flat nose.

Then two years later, they started “Pug Sunday”—a pug get-together on the first Sunday of the month in Alta Plaza Park, at Jackson and Steiner.

Livingston and Oliver flew to New York City in the wake of the 9/11 attack to help in pet-rescue operations. Oliver’s evocative face lightened the spirits of many a fireman during those harrowing days, she says. Back in San Francisco, rookies at the Diamond Heights Police Station made Oliver their official mascot because “they liked his moxie.”

In September, Livingston returned to her hometown of New Orleans to volunteer in the rescue of animals after Katrina. Oliver stayed behind this time.

Photo and text by Najib Joe Hakim

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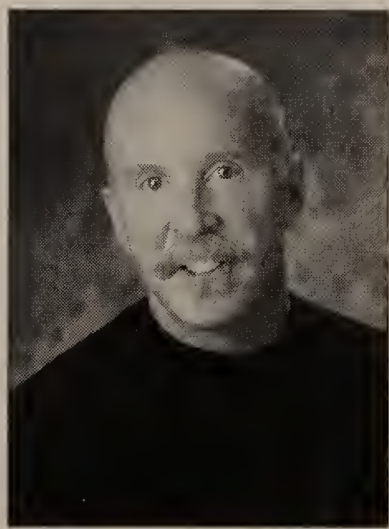
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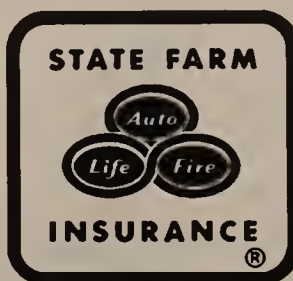
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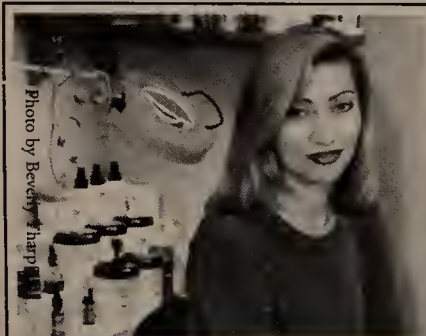
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STORE TREK

By Heidi Anderson

Store Trek is a regular feature of the *Noe Valley Voice*, profiling new stores and businesses in and around Noe Valley. This month, we introduce a new 24th Street shop specializing in fine chocolates and gelato, the Italian ice cream known for its intense flavors.

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About a year ago, Noe Valley resident Randy Jensen sold his San Francisco bakery business and traveled around Europe for a while. When he returned home, he noticed that something was lacking on 24th Street.

"I woke up one morning and asked myself, Where in Noe Valley can you buy good gelato or a Belgian chocolate...and it stays open late? No place!"

Jensen set out to fill the void.

On July 20, he opened Belgano Chocolatier and Gelateria, in the corner storefront formerly filled by Stonehouse Olive Oil Company (and before that, Dharma and Tom and Dave's Juice-It), at 24th and Sanchez streets.

"From day one it's been busy," says Jensen. "The third day we served 952 people."

The small shop has a European feel and a name reminiscent of an Italian village. "We made it up," confesses Jensen. "Bel stands for Belgium, and gano stands for Lugano, Switzerland, which I love. It's a Swiss town across the border from Lake Lugano in Italy."

And Jensen is selling all of the things he dreamed about. "I wanted to provide the best—things like this award-winning gelato, Ciao Bella."

He proudly points to the long, sleek gelato case that he imported from Italy to hold 23 flavors of Ciao Bella's frozen gelato and sorbetto. Customers can sample familiar gelato flavors like chocolate, lemon, raspberry, or coconut, but they also may treat themselves to the extravagant-sounding Blackberry Cabernet, Blood Orange Sorbetto, or Valrhona Chocolat, made with French chocolate. Prices range from \$3.50 for a two-scoop cup to \$6 for a hand-packed pint.

Gelato shakes and smoothies appear on



A mom and baby try to choose among the 23 gelato flavors at Belgano on 24th Street.
Photo by Jon Brittonson

the menu as well, and, in a salute to the neighborhood, Jensen has named them after local streets. For starters, you can try the "Noe Street" (chocolate, banana, espresso), the "24th Street" (espresso and chocolate), the "Duncan Street" (strawberry, blueberry, mango, orange, and passion fruit), and the "Church Street" (honey and vanilla-bean gelato). Shakes come in one size, large, for \$6.75.

Jensen points out that the sorbets are 75 to 80 percent fresh fruit, with a "little bit" of sugar, and ice. "They're good for vegans and those who are lactose-intolerant," he says.

The chocolate and candy Jensen carries come from a well-known Belgian candy-maker named Leonidas. He will tempt you with "Gianduja," candy made with pure praline, or the "Manon Café," a chocolate with coffee, fresh buttercream, and hazelnuts. For the adventurous, there is the "Europe" (ganache and rum).

Jensen jokes that he checks ID before selling that piece.

Prices for chocolate by the piece run from 30 cents to \$1.80.

"In places in Europe, people will stop in at the local chocolatier and buy one piece, say on their way home from work," Jensen says. "I want customers to know they can come in for one piece, just to pick them up a little!"

In fact, he prefers it that way. "Our chocolate has no preservatives. It's very fresh. We prefer not to sell it by the pound, unless of course it's for a party."

Belgano sells no-sugar-added chocolate by the piece, too (made with Splenda), and "most of our chocolates are kosher."

Jensen also is proud to offer the Italian coffee Illy Caffè, named for Francesco Illy, who perfected the espresso machine more than 50 years ago. A regular cup of coffee is \$1.65, a double shot of espresso \$2, and a cappuccino \$3.50.

For early risers, Jensen has a sweet deal. "Anyone who orders a cappuccino or latte before 11 a.m. gets a free piece of chocolate," he says.

Or maybe they'd prefer to buy a pastry. Jensen carries Bakers of Paris and several items from the bakery he sold last year, Sweet Inspirations. "Since we opened here, the most popular pastry has been our tart with chocolate crust, Valrhona chocolate, strawberry and raspberry," he says. "But I'd have to say that the lemon ginger cookie and the tangy lemon bar are popular, too." Prices range from \$2 to \$6.95.

Belgano Chocolatier and Gelateria will ship orders overnight to any place in the U.S., and after Oct. 20 you can order from the web site.

Meanwhile, the shop is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and until 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. "The only day we'll close is Christmas Day."

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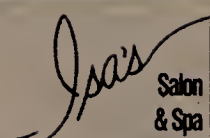
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Robin Clausen (top) is smiling over her reading in front of Overall Cottage at the Monteagle Assembly Grounds in Tennessee.



Honeymooners **Marco and Sandra Sanvido** (right) of Valley Street brought their love of fine journalism to Prague in the Czech Republic.



Robert and Jan Gregory couldn't enjoy the Blue Mosque in Istanbul until they finished their newspaper.



Susan Ehrlich, Jill Linwood, and their baby son **Eli** came out where the light for reading was better after exploring an underground section of Cappadocia, Turkey.



Alice Russell-Shapiro and Mark Sistrand had to share their Voice while in Ravenna, Italy.

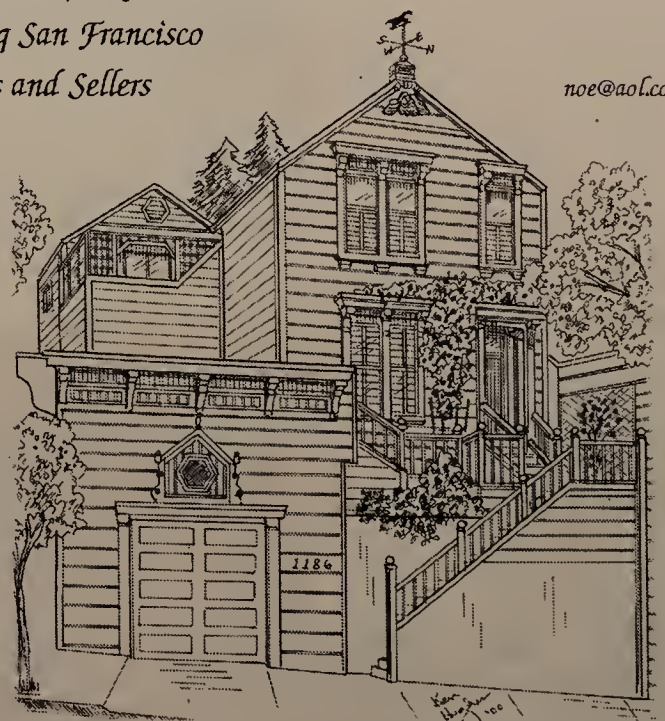


Carol Badran spent time in El Salvador during July volunteering with the Barefoot Angels project, helping underprivileged youth create a "Photovoice" project. You can view some of the results back here in San Francisco at Ruby's Clay Studio starting Oct. 20.

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Illustrated Reminiscences
by Florence Holub

The Return of Frankenstein

Editor's Note: Halloween at the Holub household could be quite a fright, as Florence recalls in this essay reprinted from the November 1994 Voice.

Without children around the house, Halloween simply isn't the fun it used to be. In fact, at the moment our whole block seems to be devoid of children!

While our sons were still at home, so many children streamed up and down our front stairs that Leo and I often had to make emergency runs to the nearest candy counter to keep up with the trick-or-treat demands of the evening.

We first got into the spirit of the occasion in the early '50s, when our boys Michael and Jan were 6 and 8 years old and we were living on an alley near Mission and 30th streets.

At that time, the Davy Crockett revival was in full swing. His life story was all the rage in books, films, and merchandising, so Halloween seemed like a good excuse to buy genuine coon-skin caps for our sons. To complete their costumes, I sewed mountain-man outfits out of brown denim, which they wore in the Fairmount School costume parade. After Halloween, the boys continued to don those fur hats until the moths finally got to them.

A few years later, when the paint business had slowed down in the corner store that I managed for my father, I was spurred by idleness to dream up something a little more complicated for Halloween. Many large empty cardboard boxes were piling up in the rear of the store, so I decided to utilize them as foundations for what were called helmet masks. Making a round head out of a square box took some doing, but with scissors, tape, wheat paste, paint, and a little muscle, I managed to mold two huge, wobbly heads. Then we added cardboard noses, ears, and mops of colored yarn for hair.

So that our sons could see where they were going, I cut out a large smiling mouth for them to peer through. Then I stapled shoulder straps to the boxes to keep the heads in place.

The heads were finished a week early and were such a hit with the local small fry that one boy, Frankie Jewell, rushed to his house at the other end of the street to beg his father to make him one too—more specifically, a giant robot head.

Being the owner of a watch repair shop, Mr. Jewell was accustomed to working on a minute scale. Papier-mâché was a bit out of his league, though. Nevertheless, he took on the task, eager to please his precious offspring.

The project proved to be an expensive and frustrating undertaking, however, one that brought Mr. Jewell back and forth from his house to our store for supplies and advice. (But it was a shot in the arm for our paint supply business!) First, the cardboard nose kept falling off. So I sold him some of our new miracle paste, Elmer's Glue-All. Then he added too much red pigment to the paint, and he had to start all over again with the purchase of a fresh batch.

Mr. Jewell worked on the robot head during the day while his son was at school, so Frankie had no knowledge of his father's painstaking effort. When the youngster finally saw the finished product, it was not what he had envisioned and he said thoughtlessly, "That's not very good," much to his father's chagrin.

His opinion changed, however, when he wore it to the school parade. Frankie, Michael, and Jan were the center of attention, and the success almost went to their heads!

We became so fond of those helmet masks that we kept them up in the attic until about 10 years ago, when some wheat-paste-and-cardboard-eating bugs began riddling them with holes.

After our youngest son, Eric, was born, we moved to our home on 21st Street (in 1957). Back then, it looked a lot like a haunted house—with its dark shingles, thick bushes, and legions of spiders—so Halloween continued to be a big event.

As Michael and Jan grew older, they preferred to fashion their own ghoulish costumes, which grew more repulsive with every year. I remember how Jan took an already hideous Frankenstein monster mask and added even more hideous accessories, including large warty feet and gnarled bloody hands. Ugh.

I was always happy to see Frankenstein go up into the attic to wait it out until the next Halloween. There was one year, however, when those warty feet and bloody hands came back to haunt us sooner than expected.

One evening when Leo and I returned from a night out, we found one of our built-in babysitters, Jan, sleeping soundly with younger brother Eric in our big bed. (Jan and Michael charged us the going sitter rate—50 cents an hour, plus a 25-cent surcharge for bed-warming services.) They looked so peaceful that we didn't want to disturb them, so we tiptoed out to sleep the remainder of the night in Jan's bed. When we opened the door to his room, we detected a movement from the shadows, and as the beam of light from the hall broadened we saw a sight that froze us in our tracks. There in the captain's chair, with his arm upraised, sat the hulking monster of Frankenstein.

When we had recovered from our fright, we shook with laughter at the ingenious apparition created by our teenage son. Jan had stuffed the torso of an Army-drab suit with pillows, and the arms and legs with towels, leaving those



ugly hands and feet protruding. He had rigged one arm with a cord attached to the door so that whenever the door opened, the arm would rise in a forbidding gesture.

Then it all became clear. This was the reason our formerly fearless little Eric, age 3, had recently developed an aversion to going upstairs alone.

Prior to the onset of this phobia, Eric had often sneaked upstairs to Jan's room—when Jan was at James Lick School all day and I was busy with household chores—to investigate some of his older brother's fascinating possessions, such as his train sets. Jan could always tell when Eric had been in his room, but he could never catch him red-handed. So he had devised a deterrent: Frankenstein.

His plan certainly worked, but it had gone too far: Eric was petrified.

As we all pondered the problem, Jan quietly took action, by designing his own "fear-deprogrammer." First, he constructed a standing version of the monster, which he placed in the downstairs broom closet. Then he began instructing Eric on how to activate it, showing him how opening the door raised the arm, which then dropped with the door's closing. He coaxed Eric to repeat the action many times, so it would become routine.

The day of the deprogramming, a co-worker of Leo's, Oscar, dropped in. He watched the goings-on with amusement, but when he left, he remarked, "This may make him afraid of closets!"

It didn't, fortunately. And within a few days, the monster had no effect whatsoever on our youngest boy. I, however, would sometimes forget, and would experience a frightful jolt upon opening the closet door to get a broom!

Eventually, the monster was again relegated to the attic and was not called upon except at Halloween.

Last Halloween, Leo got out a stock of Snickers, our favorite candy bar, to dispense to any trick-or-treaters who climbed our front steps. But since no one came before our early-to-bed time, we turned out the lights, went upstairs to bed, and ate the candy ourselves (leaving one or two Snickers for old Frank, of course!).



On Halloween night 1953, Jan and Michael Holub and their buddy Frankie Jewell (dressed as a robot, top right) wowed the neighborhood with their strange noggins. Photo by Leo Holub



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Good Holes Make for Good Neighbors. Dr. Robin Serrahn (standing at left) and Ellen Little (middle in "doorway") found a saw and made it easier to get together for play, visiting or snacks. The youngsters heartily approve. From left to right they are Allegra Thélémaque, Maia Serrahn Resnick, Charly Lenney, Sam Lenney (seated) and David Serrahn Resnick.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

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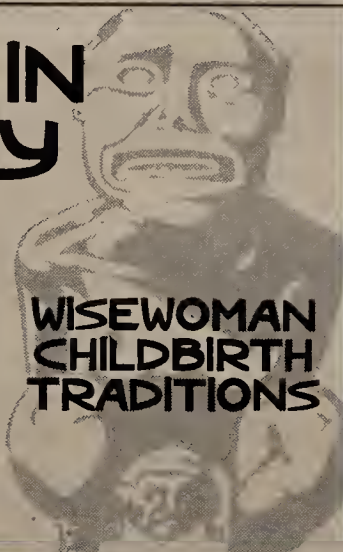
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Teen Rockers

For some kids, music lessons are boring, and practice is torture. Period. But for others the sounds, the rhythms, and the discipline of music are a joy. And performing with others is a thrill. Here are some Noe Valley teens who've formed rock bands. They've been practicing, they've been writing, and their mentors think they've got the chops to make waves on the local indie music scene.

Text by Betsy Bannerman
Photos by Pamela Gerard

Curiously Strong gelled just three years ago at Live Oak School, but the all-girl rock band has already performed at the JCC, Great American Music Hall, and Yoshi's. They enjoy listening to everything from Jimi Hendrix to Jimmy Eat World ("as long as the song actually has a point to get across," says Clare Wlodarczyk, 14). Their repertoire ranges from the '60s hit "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'" to current faves like Fastball's "The Way." How'd they get hooked on playing? "You get an energy



CURIOUSLY STRONG, left to right: Clare Wlodarczyk, bass guitar, vocals; Olivia Evans, keyboard, drums, vocals; Brenna Stanton, keyboard, vocals; Alissa Goldberg, guitar, vocals.



ROT, left to right: Alex Rowson, drums; Julian LoGiudici, guitar.

Stooges and Guitar Wolf." Both want to continue playing as adults. "But I don't want to be poor, you know," laughs Alex.

The five young rockers in **Mercury** have been friends since kindergarten and bandmates since fifth grade, playing annually in Live Oak School talent shows and last spring at Fattoosh Restaurant on Church Street. Musician/teacher Patti Cobb is their coach; and they rehearse weekly in her 25th Street basement, regularly switching instruments ("They have an amazingly fertile cross-pollination!" laughs Cobb). The band members, all 12, are close and committed to their music. "I like being good at something that's really hard to learn," says Spencer McEvoy. Songwriter Nicky Jones adds, "There's joy in creating a good composition, and it's fun to hear my voice and our instruments come together." Do they see the band as a career? "I like the challenge, but it's kind of nerve-racking to perform," says Haley Davis. Maritte O'Gallagher agrees: "I think I want to stick to music as a hobby and maybe become a vet." Danielle Goldberg, who with Haley thought up the band's name, also has things figured out. "I want to be an unfamous musician—because the famous ones don't have any privacy!"



MERCURY, left to right: Haley Davis, keyboard, tambourine, drums, vocals; Nicky Jones, bass guitar, vocals; Danielle Goldberg, guitar, drums, vocals; Spencer McEvoy, guitar; Maritte O'Gallagher, drums, keyboards, and vocals.

inside you that is so inspiring," says Brenna Stanton, 14. Thirteen-year-old singer-guitarist Alissa Goldberg adds, "I like hearing what's inside my head out of my head, so others can hear it, too." Olivia Evans, also 13, plans to play an instrument "always—like when grownups come to parties and bring their guitar or something.... Maybe I should switch from piano and drums—I don't want to be carrying them to parties!"

Rot plays "doom metal, death metal, and black metal," but Julian LoGiudici, who co-founded the band with drummer Alex Rowson, says the music is not as scary as it sounds. "Doom is just really slow and heavy. And awesome," says the 16-year-old guitarist. "And 'shredding' on guitar is the greatest feeling in the world!" Alex, also 16, agrees: "When you get a real good and loud band along with you, you can just feel the power of rock run through your whole body!" The duo formed Rot this summer, and they've already started recording. "We're overdubbing all the parts, being as there are only two of us," says Julian. Both teens have musicians in the family (Julian's dad is guitarist/teacher John LoGiudici). At home, Julian listens to "riff-oriented doom and classic rock," while Alex grooves on "punk, death metal, industrial dance, some weird stuff, and rockin' music like the

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SCHOOL REPORT

This month's School Report introduces the new principal at Alvarado, and gives an update on the happenings at James Lick and Fairmount schools.

ALVARADO

Alvarado Welcomes New Principal

With warm hearts and open arms, the Alvarado School community welcomed Clementina Durón as its new principal this fall. Ms. Durón comes with an extensive background in education that includes more than 15 years experience as a principal for both elementary and middle schools. Most recently, she taught a first-grade Spanish-immersion class at San Francisco's Cesar Chavez Elementary School.

"Alvarado is a very enriching place," says Durón. "Students have a variety of subjects to enhance their learning. Key to this is the parent involvement through the PTA. This gives the students a broader program to enrich the whole child above and beyond test scores. Test scores are important, but parents' involvement brings other areas to the school. Also, Alvarado has fantastic teachers!"

The new principal has worked closely with the teaching staff, site council, and PTA to initiate Junior Great Books, a new schoolwide literacy enrichment program. Durón used this program to great effect at Cesar Chavez and is looking forward to the teachers going through a two-day training program in October funded by the PTA.

"This is a literacy program," says Durón, "that focuses on enrichment through literary analysis, reading comprehension, introducing new vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. With the addition of this program we hope to further bridge the gap by the time all students leave the fifth grade."

Junior Great Books is also in keeping with the newly adopted districtwide program On Our Way to English.

Test Scores Up in Most Areas

The school community was excited to hear that the test scores from last year were higher than the year before in all areas except reading for the English learners, whose needs are already being addressed by the school's new literacy programs. Congratulations, students, and thank you to the teachers and staff at Alvarado for your commitment and hard work!



New principal Clementina Durón is excited about working and playing with the "fantastic" teachers, parents, and students attending Alvarado School.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

First PTA Meeting

A large turnout greeted our first PTA meeting, where we learned that the PTA raised an amazing \$151,000 last year to fund programs for this year, including art teachers, a dance teacher, the new literacy program, and a motor skills program for the younger grades. Thank you to everyone who helped us achieve this goal, and please read on to see how you can help with this year's fundraising efforts.

How You Can Help!

We always need more volunteers at Alvarado and there are many ways to get involved, from reading to a group of students in the library, to working with a student on improving reading on a one-to-one basis.

Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Lisa Barry, 467-4748 or lisa4304@yahoo.com, for more information.

You can also help just by purchasing your groceries and signing up with E-Script when you shop at Safeway. For more information, contact the school office at 695-5695. If you are a Rainbow Grocery shopper, up to 10 percent of your purchase will go to Alvarado if you pre-purchase Rainbow scrip before shopping. Contact Carin Remstedt at 309-8115 or remstedt@pachell.net.

Calendar Events

School tours for prospective families take place on Tuesday mornings from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. beginning Oct. 4.

The Oct. 11 PTA meeting will begin at 6 p.m. with a focus on greeting new families and reviewing the various committees of the PTA.

How to Contact Us: Call the school at 695-5695 or visit our web site at www.alvaradoschool.net. The address is 625 Douglass Street at Alvarado Street.

—Lisa Barry

Alvarado School Volunteer Coordinator

JAMES LICK

Back to School Night

Parents attending Back to School Night at James Lick Middle School on Sept. 20 experienced what it is like to be a student as they rushed through crowded halls to get to classes in the same three-minute passing periods their children face every day. Tardy adults learned the consequences for late arrival: detention!

Those attending the evening appreciated the emphasis on clearly stated rules with consistent enforcement, improved resources for home-school communication, and innovative new classes. For ex-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50

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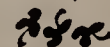
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SCHOOL REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49

ample, some teachers are using My-GradeBook.com, an Internet service that allows students and their parents to monitor their actual grades and class standings. Also, a new Media Arts class hopes to develop sophisticated analytical and critical-thinking skills through hands-on projects working with film, video, and other media.

In brief 10-minute presentations, the teachers managed to explain class content and goals while conveying their very strong commitment to their students and the school. In addition, they encouraged parents to participate in their children's learning and to support fundraising activities such as Café Lick, which sells snacks to City College students in the evenings. They added that some programs wouldn't exist without students' and families' generous help.

Coffee with Clarity

Principal Carmelo Sgarlato hosted the year's first Coffee with the Principal on Friday, Sept. 30, with a presentation designed to demystify the STAR test results recently mailed to families. Because the reports were not translated for non-English-speaking families, a question-and-answer session especially for them was also included. A discussion of strategies families can use to support their children's progress in language arts and math followed, with translation provided in Spanish.

The next chat will take place Oct. 14 in the Parent Liaison Office, Room 108, 1220 Noe Street, from 9 to 10 a.m.

Costa Rica Trip Planned

Students participating in James Lick's International Travel Program will visit Costa Rica in February 2006. On Sept. 22, families of seventh- and eighth-grade students planning to make the trek met for the first of many times to discuss fundraising and preparations for the trip.

Spanish-Immersion at Mission High

Did you know there will be a new Spanish-immersion high school program opening at Mission High School in August of 2005? Learn about this exciting new project and share your ideas for its development on Wednesday, Oct. 5, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Mission High School on 18th Street. Eighth-grade Spanish-immersion and Spanish bilingual students and their families are especially encouraged to attend. Tours, food, childcare, and translation services will be provided.

Art Sale at Harvest Fest

Looking for something snazzy to hang over that boring old couch? Got some cracked plaster you need to hide? You'll find exciting works of art created by James Lick students for sale at the school's booth at the first-ever Noe Valley Harvest Festival on Saturday, Oct. 22, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. The event takes place on 24th Street in "Downtown" Noe Valley. Be there early for the best selection!

Sweep Those Cares Away

A school cleanup and beautification day is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 5. Families and neighbors are invited to join us.

Tours of James Lick Middle School for prospective families will start this month. Please come to the Parent Room at 9 a.m. Thursday mornings, from October through December. You will have the opportunity to meet current Lick families, see the school, and meet with our principal.

pal. E-mail sandra@ppssf.org to confirm or to arrange another time. You may also stop by the James Lick information table at the Public School Fair on Saturday, Oct. 29, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium.

—Sue Cattoche
School volunteer

FAIRMOUNT

Sports Program Kicks Off Year

The kids were running through the yard with Principal Karling Aguilera-Fort leading the way, taking big strides as he encouraged Fairmount students to keep up. Broad smiles lit up their faces as they made a huge arc through the upper yard.

The new school year has seen the addition of a comprehensive physical education program called Sports 4 Kids. No longer will recess be a time of aimless milling and running about. The program has brought a fun-filled yet challenging curriculum to develop Fairmount students' physical fitness and ability. Long-time P.E. consultant Chris Loughran will also continue to work with students and staff and is coordinating with the new program to plan for maximum impact.

"I am glad Sports 4 Kids has initiated activities with Fairmount Elementary," says Aguilera-Fort. "Sports 4 Kids is bringing structures, games, and monitoring for the different recesses within the school day. Sports 4 Kids is also providing after-school activities for students."

Funding for the program comes from the benefit performance of the musical *The Lion King*, donated by Carole Shorenstein Hays last year.

Benefit Party at the Mansion

On Labor Day weekend, Upper Noe Valley art collector, band-saw player, and bon vivant Bob Pritikin had a few hun-

dred of his closest friends over to his mansion on Chenery Street to hear Eddie Fisher sing, as well as to mingle with former Mayor Willie Brown and Angela Alioto, Mark Leno, and other politicians as they all picnicked on barbecued chicken and potato salad.

The news behind the scenes was that Pritikin, whose splendid mansion with an indoor swimming pool adjoins the Fairmount School campus, had agreed to offer the mansion for a school fundraising party to be held Nov. 18. Details to come, but save the date in case you've ever wondered what was behind those walls with the statuettes.

Wash Your Car and Have a Nibble

The long dry summer has left a lot of Noe Valley cars in need of a wash.

In a new twist for this year's event, Fairmount's multicultural community will share their favorite dishes and desserts that you can sample while the school's energetic students and parents give your car that custom wash job. Drive on over Oct. 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and enter the yard on Randall Street between San Jose Avenue and Chenery. Enjoy those homemade tamales.

—Tom Ruiz
Fairmount School parent and volunteer

SCHOOL CONTACTS

Alvarado Elementary School
625 Douglass Street at Alvarado
415-695-5695

Clementina Durón, Principal

James Lick Middle School
1220 Noe Street at 25th Street
415-695-5675 or 415-436-0349
Carmelo Sgarlato, Principal

Fairmount Elementary School
65 Chenery Street at Randall
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BOOKS *in our* BRANCH

This month's book list, chosen by Noe Valley librarian Carol Small and *Voice* bookworm Karol Barske, features a "billy sook" for children by Shel Silverstein, as well as John Dean's comparison of George W. Bush and Richard Nixon. To find out which books are available, go to www.sfpl.org, call 355-5707, or visit the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey Street. Note: The Jersey Street library is scheduled to close for renovation in early November. After that time, the library lapsits and story time will be held Wednesday mornings at Upper Noe Recreation Center and a bookmobile will make regular visits to the curb in front of St. Philip's School, at Diamond and Elizabeth streets. Bill Yenne's office at Diamond and 24th (AGS Book Works, 818 Diamond Street) will house the Noe Valley historical archives, as well as the library's collection of *Noe Valley Voice* newspapers. Until the building is closed, the Jersey Street library will remain open Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesdays, 1 to 9 p.m.; Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fridays, 1 to 6 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Adult Fiction

◆ Environmental issues tear a Michigan family apart in *True North* by Jim Harrison, author of *Legends of the Fall*.

◆ Black sheep Sophie Applebaum goes on a quest for her identity in Melissa Bank's humorous novel *The Wonder Spot*.

◆ Originally published in 1961, *Children of the Streets* by science-fiction writer Harlan Ellison describes New York City gang life.

◆ *The White Night of St. Petersburg*, by Prince Michael of Greece, imagines what happened to the descendants of the Romanovs after the brutal murder in 1917 of Tsar Nicholas II and 20 members of his family.

Adult Nonfiction

◆ In *Worse than Watergate*, John Dean, former counsel to Richard Nixon, draws parallels between the current presidency and the past scandal.

◆ *My Boyfriend's Back* by Donna Hanover tells "the true story of rediscovering love with a long-lost sweetheart."

◆ Poet Nick Flynn's memoir, *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*, describes his Massachusetts boyhood and life on the streets.

◆ Andrew Breitbart and Mark Ebner make a case against celebrity and "insanity chic in Babylon," in *Hollywood, Interrupted*.

Children's Fiction

◆ When you read *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale*, by Mo Willems, you will see what could happen when a beloved stuffed animal goes into the washing machine by mistake. *Ages 2 to 4.*

◆ Rosemary Wells illustrates a song from the musical *Guys and Dolls* with two flirty ducklings playing together on a farm in *I Love You! A Bushel and a Peck*. *Ages 2 to 5.*

◆ In *Dinos on the Go!* author Karma Wilson and illustrator Laura Rader show that Triceratops, Stegasaurus, and many of their associates use different transportation to get to their 40,000,000-year reunion. *Ages 3 to 5.*

◆ When Grace was 8, she and her family spent several months visiting Eucla, Perth, Windjana Gorge, Tanami Track, and many other interesting places in their home country of Australia, in *Are We There Yet?* by Alison Lester. *Ages 6 to 9.*

◆ When Dorso "time-travels" to Wounded Knee and is hurt by a bow and arrow, he realizes that the person who tampered with his laptop is up to no good, in *The Time Hackers* by Gary Paulsen. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ In a book by Marie Testa, a girl thinks her father will be in Vietnam *Almost Forever*, but she has a happy reunion with him when he finally returns home. *Ages 8 and up.*

◆ If Shel Silverstein's many fans read his latest book, *Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook*, they will meet Toe Jurtle, Gocor Doose, Millie Woose, and many other characters. *Ages 8 and up.*

Children's Nonfiction

◆ In *The Shot Heard 'Round the World*, author Phil Bildner and illustrator C.F. Payne give modern baseball fans a glimpse of what it was like to huddle around a radio in suspense about whether "Dem Bums" would go to the World Series. *Ages 5 and up.*



LIBRARY EVENTS

Saturday Lapsits

◆ The library's *lapsits* for infants, toddlers, and their parents feature stories, songs, and finger plays on Saturdays, Oct. 1 and 8, at 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Story Time and Films

◆ Children ages 2 to 5 are invited to attend a *preschool story time* at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays, Oct. 18 and 25. *Films*, including *Corduroy*, *Madeline*, and *One Was Johnny*, will be shown at 10 and 11 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 11.

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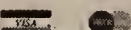
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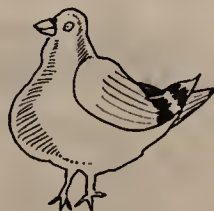
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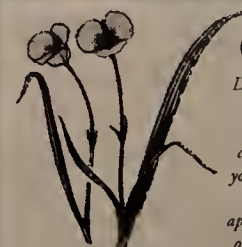
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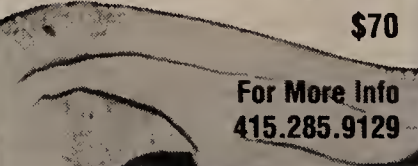
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Daily/Weekly Rental: Noe Valley studio apartment. Located on Vicksburg near 23rd Street, it's an alternative to hotels and motels. Private entrance in a garden setting. The unit offers a queen-sized bed, full kitchen with dining area, cable TV, and three-quarter bath. No pets, no smoking. Call Jim at 415-285-6433 or (cell) 415-215-2617.

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Let's Unpack Your Baggage Together. Warm, open, intuitive psychotherapist with years of experience welcomes you to her practice. Focus on mind/body connection and creating a safe place for healing. It would be an honor to work with you. Valerie Eilert, M.F.T., 2030 Fillmore Street, San Francisco. 415-364-3004.

Words Wanted: The Noe Valley Voice welcomes submissions of stories, poems, and essays. Write lastname@noevalleyvoice.com or send manuscript, plus name, phone, and e-mail to Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Include SASE if you need materials returned.

How to Place a Class Ad

It's easy. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **40¢ per word**, and send us a check or money order for the total amount. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as one word.)

Then mail your ad copy and check, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15th of the month before** the month in which you'd like to advertise. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. (Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or e-mail at this time.)

10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes a news edition 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Voice* will be the November 2005 issue, distributed in Noe Valley on or before Nov. 1. **The deadline for Class Ads is Oct. 15.** The Class Ads are printed in the newspaper edition and then displayed for one month on our web site: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Thank you for your support.

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

And the Blight Goes On

By Mazook

FRESH LITIGATION: In the waning days and nights of September, the lights went back on in Real Food Company and a new set of building permits was slapped on the store window. The permits allowed work on the premises starting Sept. 12, and listed the "completion date" as March 2006. Completion of *what* wasn't specified, however. What also wasn't made clear was whether Real Food Co. would reopen on 24th Street in this century.

As most *Voice* readers know, the once-thriving natural foods store has been vacant for two years, due to a Series of Unfortunate Events. The saga began in February of 2002, when Fresh Organics Inc., a subsidiary of the Utah-based Nutraceutical Corporation, purchased Real Food from the grocery's founders, Kimball and Jane Allen. A year and a half later, on Labor Day Weekend (otherwise known as the Labor Day Massacre), Fresh Organics suddenly dismissed the workers and shut down the store, ostensibly "for remodeling."

The closing led to disputes between the Allens and Fresh Organics—as to who was going to pay for what during the remodel, and what structural repairs actually needed to be made—and between Fresh Organics and the Real Food employees, who complained to the National Labor Relations Board about their abrupt termination.

The labor issues were aired in an NLRB hearing last spring in San Francisco (see April *Voice*). The two sides in that case are still awaiting a decision.

Meanwhile, the dispute between Fresh Organics and the Allens has wound up in San Francisco Superior Court. In June, Fresh Organics filed a complaint against the Allens, alleging things like "breach of written lease," "negligent misrepresentation," and "rescission of purchase agreement." The company also asked for damages of "at least \$2.65 million."

The Allens objected strongly to the complaint, and the court sustained some of their objections and denied others. Now the couple have responded to the amended complaint (which they received in August) by filing a cross-complaint against Fresh Organics, alleging the same kind of wrongdoing as their rival. For their part, the Allens are seeking damages in the sum of \$161,000, for allegedly unpaid rent since May of 2004. (Fresh Organics' rent was \$9,500 per month until May of 2005, and \$11,000 thereafter.)

Next up on the court docket is a hearing Oct. 18 on Fresh Organics' objections to the Allens' cross-complaint. After that, there's a "case management conference" scheduled for Nov. 4, to see if the matter can be set for jury trial, which is being demanded by both parties. Court-watchers estimate the jury trial will start in the spring of 2006.

Locals are wagering that Glen Park's new Bi-Rite will open its doors before Noe Valley's Real Food can lay down the paint cloths.



FOR WHOM THE BELL FOLDS: The fate of Bell Market is still the subject of neighborhood rumor and speculation after a story in last month's *Voice* reported that Kroger Corporation (aka Ralphs) was trying to shed its Northern California operations, which include 20 Cala/Bell

stores.

In the months following the closing of Real Food, Bell gained a lot of local respect by responding quickly to neighborhood demands for organic produce. So the thought of a potential change (Longs Drugs, for instance) sent shivers through the local populace.

The buzz in August was that the high-end Mollie Stone's was interested in the deal. Then, in September, the rumor was that Piggly Wiggly, a porky chain based in the Southeast, was eyeing our Bay Area Bells.

Well, the *Voice* snoops couldn't get Ralphs' bigwigs to confirm either rumor. However, if it's any consolation, a representative of the 24th Street Bell's property owner said our request for confirmation was the first time they'd even heard the words *Piggly Wiggly*. And the property owner would know, trust us.

Another rumor, unrelated to Bell, has proved to be true: Albertsons supermarkets—over 2,300 of them—are up for sale. Seems to be a buyer's market for markets.

Meanwhile, Bell customers will be delighted to learn that Ralphs has brought back Noe Valleyan Enrico Fornesi as store manager. Fornesi, born and raised in the neighborhood, has been a Bell employee for a long time (way before Kroger acquired the Bell chain). He was promoted to manager after Ralphs took over the store in the mid-1990s. A couple of years ago, the chain transferred Fornesi to another Bell. (Ralphs used to have a corporate policy of regularly rotating managers among their stores.)

The very popular Fornesi is tops in customer service, and will be happy to handle your customer requests and pass all your prickly-wiggly questions up the chain of command.



IT'S A REC: Renovations to the Upper

Noe Recreation Center will be the topic at an Oct. 6 community meeting sponsored by the city's Rec and Park Department. The meeting will convene at the rec center on Day Street at 6 p.m., and run until 8:45.

First on the agenda will be a presentation on the revised layout for the dog play area at the back of the park. Upper Noe resident and city architect Paul Travis says the revisions focus primarily on the designs of the entrances to the dog run. Travis worked on the original plan for the dog run, which opened earlier this year.

After that, the San Francisco Arts Commission's Public Art Program (PAP) will introduce Troy Corliss, the artist who has been picked to create a work of public art for the rec center, which will be undergoing a major overhaul sometime in the next couple of years. (The project is supposed to go out to bid in April 2006, with construction starting in October 2007.)

Corliss—who is from Woodland, Calif., and who was selected from among 27 candidates by a panel of six neighborhood residents and a "visiting artist"—will give a slide show of his work and talk about his conceptual design for the art at the rec center.

To get all the poop on Upper Noe's renovation, call the project director, Keith Kawamura, at 581-2546.



DAY STREET PARK is what they used to call Upper Noe Rec Center back in the 1950s. If you grew up in that era, you might want to attend a reunion of "the old gang" on Oct. 8 at the Irish Cultural Center, 2700 45th Avenue.

"We were a group of kids that hung out at the Day Street Park in Noe Valley in the '50s," says one of the organizers, Pat Ormsby, who now lives in the East Bay.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"Most of us girls attended St. Paul's High School, and the guys attended Riordan, Sacred Heart, St. Ignatius, Mission, Poly, and Balboa.... Many marriages happened in the group, and we still get together every five years" for a big party in San Francisco.

Ormsby says there will be about 200 people at the reunion, including spouses and partners. To find out the details, give Ormsby a call at 510-490-2344.

It is terrific that these neighbors have maintained contact all these years. They have even installed a plaque in the park, where they list the names of those in the group who have died.

☎ ☎ ☎

I'M OAK, YOU'RE OAK: A project is under way to rescue a century-old Norfolk Island pine standing in the back yard of a house on Sanchez Street near 24th. According to the leader of the tree-protectors, Tracey Hughes, this gem is "almost 100 feet high, has a canopy of at least 60 to 70 feet, and a trunk that is 33 inches in diameter."

Evidently, a developer bought the 19th-century house with plans to demolish it and build a number of units in the front. Though the owner was going to keep the back yard, says Hughes, his schematics appeared to squeeze out the tree.

"I was worried when I noticed that this tree, that I have looked at for the past 21 years I've lived here, was not in the plans sent around to the neighbors, although it was on one of the drawings at the Planning Department." After she complained, the developer hired an arborist, who recommended a 33-foot-radius zone, mea-

suring from the trunk, to protect the tree's root system.

Hughes says she collected 178 signatures from people who wanted to save the tree, which even at 100 years old has a future life expectancy of 50 or more years. She says she was motivated because "our neighbors know that this tree is part of our heritage. It cleans the air of all the diesel exhaust on 24th Street near our corner, it provides an incredible amount of privacy, it is an amazing bird sanctuary/habitat and an endless source of beauty and wonder. Hopefully, it will still be there when the kids at the Noe Valley Ministry Nursery School grow up."

Maybe we should save the 19th-century house, while we're at it.

☎ ☎ ☎

BABY, YOU CAN SHARE MY CAR: City CarShare, which offers car pickups at two Noe Valley locations (Walgreen's and the Noe Valley Ministry parking lot), is facing competition from a Boston company called Zipcar.

According to Zipcar CEO Scott Griffith, his business decided this summer to expand its hourly car-rental operation to San Francisco: Zipcar already had programs in Boston, New York City, and Washington, D.C.

The cars rent for \$8.50 per hour for up to 125 miles. There are no up-front deposits, and the price includes fuel.

The first nine Zipcar locations in San Francisco were unveiled last month, and they're spread all around the city. But at press time no pods had yet been located in Noe Valley. However, Griffith says his team is on the lookout for a spot, and is holding discussions with the owners of the Noe Valley Ministry parking lot on 24th Street. Right now, the closest Zipcars can be found at 15th and Market, and 16th and Guerrero. If you hurry and make a reservation online at Zipcar.com, you'll get \$25 in free rentals.

☎ ☎ ☎

NOTICE ANY NEW TOWERS AROUND? Many Noe Valleyans were surprised to see a Cingular cell phone ad in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in August, announcing new antenna sites in "Noe Valley, Nob Hill, and Cow Hollow."

The Noe Valley Bureau of Investigation is reporting that there are currently micro-cell antennas on buildings located on 24th Street at the corners of Sanchez and Castro. The nearest Cingular tower is at 17th and Castro.

The NVBI is asking those of you who are aware of other cell phone towers or antennas to contact the editors of this paper as soon as possible.

☎ ☎ ☎

STYLES CHANGE: Noe's Nest, a popular Bed and Breakfast at 23rd and Noe, has closed, but owner Sheila Ash will recreate it at 1257 Guerrero Street. "We have applied for the permits and hope to reopen next year," she says.

Ash, who has run the B&B for the past 18 years, is currently concentrating on "catering to kosher clients and providing hospice care for plastic-surgery patients." For the past five years, she's run a personal services business called Rent-A-Mother, for people in need of someone to shop, cook, and clean for them.

Ash is also a fashion designer, and has a wardrobe that includes more than 150 hats. She prides herself on the fundraising fashion shows she sponsors, and she was recently featured in the *Asahi Japan Weekly*. The paper described her as a styling consultant for older women who is a "role model of living and dressing in a way that turns heads wherever you enter a room, whatever your age."

Also on the move is secondhand vintage clothing store Guys and Dolls, which is relocating its burgeoning business from 24th near Church to the 24th and Castro

corner where Graystone Wine & Liquor used to be. Graciela Ronconi, born and raised in Noe Valley, has operated Guys and Dolls for the past 11 years. (Vintage clothier Always and Forever was in the storefront for 12 years before Ronconi took over the business.)

New to Noe Valley is the Calliope Dance Studio at 1414 Castro (where Lisa Violette Designs used to be). Calliope offers creative movement and ballet classes for boys and girls.

New to Noe Courts is Danny's Cleaners, on the corner of Elizabeth and Douglass, where Noe Courts corner grocery store once did business.

And there's a new business opening at 3492 22nd Street called Fireboat Gallery. (Please send us your phone number!)

☎ ☎ ☎

DEAR MIRIAM: A gathering of more than 50 people attended a memorial at the Noe Valley Ministry for longtime neighborhood activist Miriam Blaustein, who died in June at the age of 91.

Noe Valley resident Eleanore Gerhardt is now working to make sure that Miriam's name lives on forever on a plaque at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, an institution she loved and fought to save back in the 1980s and '90s. "We are planning to name one of the display cases in the newly renovated Noe Valley Library for her," says Gerhardt. And to that end, she and other Friends of Miriam are raising the necessary \$2,500.

If you would like to help, call Gerhardt at 826-0522.

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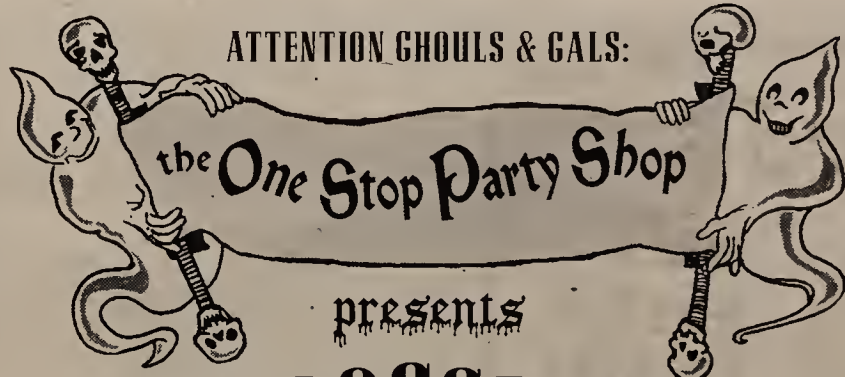
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Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230

E-mail: capa@home4us.org

Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228

Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Board meetings bimonthly; membership semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contact: Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn

Martin, 826-6734; Deanna Mooney, 821-4045

Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753

Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: First Wednesday of the month (every other month—call to confirm), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Third Thursday of the month (except December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Joyce Kurtz, 401-6362

Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110

Meetings: Call for information. The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is always held the day before Mother's Day.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862

Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman

E-mail: lauranor@yahoo.com

Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley, P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146

Meetings: E-mail for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley

Contact: Debra Niemann, 282-9918

E-mail: nemo@rcn.comWeb site: www.friendsofnoevalley.com

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146

Meetings: First or second Thursday of the month (call or e-mail to confirm), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7 p.m.

Friends of On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845

Mailing Address: 205 30th St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Contact: Christina Goebel, 826-7772

E-mail: christina_goebel@yahoo.com

Meetings: Call or e-mail for dates and times.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San Francisco, CA 94119

Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"Contact: Martine, noestrolls@aol.comMonthly Stroll: First Tuesday of the month, 1 p.m. To receive stroll locations and notices of other events, e-mail your first name, and your baby's first name and age, to noestrolls@aol.com or go to www.noestrolls.com.**Noe Valley Democratic Club**

Contact: Rafael Mandelman, 648-4010

Meetings: First Wednesday of the month; Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 7:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Co-sponsor: Noe Valley Ministry

Contact: Paula Benton, 248-1332

Mailing Address: 4104 24th St., #401, San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 6 p.m.

Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695,

kkdrew@yahoo.com; Marian Chatfield-

Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103

Mailing Address: Friends of the

San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102

Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 6:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

Contact: Carol Yenne, 648-3954

Mailing Address: c/o Small Frys, 4066 24th St., San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Last Wednesday of the month, Bank of America, 24th and Castro, 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Parent Network

Contact: Mina Kenvin

E-mail: minaken@gmail.com (this is an e-mail resource network for parents)**Outer Noe Valley Merchants**

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500

Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Call for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contacts: Don Oshiro, 285-8188

E-mail: contact@sanjoseguerrero.comWeb site: www.sanjoseguerrero.com

Meetings: See web site.

See Jane Run Running/Walking Club

Contact: Lori Shannon, 401-8338

Mailing Address: 3870 24th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114

Meetings: Sundays, 10 a.m. (Runners meet at See Jane Run to pick up the 5K run/walk route. Info? www.SeeJaneRunSports.com.)**Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association (SWMNA)**

Boundaries: 24th Street to Cesar Chavez and Fair Oaks to Mission

Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary

E-mail: lori@tail-wagging.comWeb site: www.tail-wagging.com

Meetings: E-mail for information.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473

Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Meetings: Last Thursday of the month (call to confirm), Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day and Sanchez streets, 7:30 p.m.

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Join Supervisor Gerardo Sandoval, former Supervisors Jose Medina, Harry Britt and Doris Ward, City College Trustee Lawrence Wong, School Board Member Eddie Chin, BART Director James Fang, Scott Hauge, Aileen Hernandez, Rose Chung, Bud Wilson, Espanola Jackson and the Chinese American Democratic Club, (see www.calvinlouiefortreasurer.com for complete list). Let’s hire a professional for San Francisco Treasurer.

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* BART, City College, SF Controller’s Office, Health Services, City of Berkeley

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Election Day

is Tuesday, November 8, 2005

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

選舉日是

二〇〇五年十一月八日

投票站將於早晨七時開啟至晚間八時

LAS ELECCIONES

son el martes, 8 de noviembre de 2005

Las urnas se abren de 7:00 a.m. a 8:00 p.m.

Early voting at City Hall begins **October 11th**

The last day to register to vote is **October 24th**

Important! You must re-register to vote if you changed your address, changed your name, or if you want to change your party affiliation

The last day to request an Absentee Ballot is **November 1st**

提早投票於十月十一日起在市政廳開始

登記投票截止日為十月二十四日

注意! 更改住址、姓名或黨籍的選民必須重新登記

申請缺席選票最後一日為十一月一日

Vote anticipadamente en la alcaldía a partir del **11 de octubre.**

El **24 de octubre** es el último día para registrarse para votar.

¡Importante! Usted debe volver a registrarse si ha cambiado su nombre, domicilio o afiliación a un partido político.

El último día para solicitar una balota de elector ausente por correo es el **1 de noviembre.**

Important! The location of your polling place may have changed, so check before going to the polls to vote. There are three ways to check the location of your polling place:

1. Look on the back cover of your Voter Information Pamphlet that we mail to you
2. Visit www.sfgov.org/election
3. Call the Department of Elections at (415) 554-4375

注意! 您所屬的投票站可能有所更動,記得於前往投票站前確認投票站地址。您可以利用以下三種方式查詢您投票站的位置:

1. 查閱選務處寄出的您的選民資料手冊封底
2. 選務處網站www.sfgov.org/election
3. 撥打選務處電話(415)554-4367

¡Importante! Verifíquela la ubicación de su lugar de votación antes de ir las urnas electorales. Usted puede verificar la ubicación de su lugar de votación de las siguientes maneras:

1. Consultando la contraportada del Folleto de Información para Electores que le enviamos antes de las elecciones.
2. Visitando el sitio web www.sfgov.org/election
3. Llamando el Departamento de Elecciones al (415) 554-4366

Become a Pollworker: The Department of Elections is recruiting new pollworkers to help us on election day. Pollworkers receive a maximum stipend of up to \$155. To apply to become a pollworker, complete an on-line application at www.sfelections.org/pw or call (415) 554-4395.

如何成為投票站工作人員: 選務處現正召尋有意於選舉日參與投票站工作的人士。視被分配的職務而定,投票站工作人員的津貼約為\$112至\$155元。有意申請投票站工作者可於www.sfelections.org/pw 填寫網上申請表,或致電(415)554-4395。

Trabaje como un trabajador electoral: El Departamento de Elecciones está contratando trabajadores electorales para las elecciones del 8 de noviembre. Trabajadores electorales reciben un estipendio de \$112 a \$155. Para ser un trabajador electoral, complete una aplicación en línea en www.sfelections.org/pw o llame al 415-554-4366.



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Get Informed About Ranked-Choice Voting!

了解關於優先選擇投票的細節!

¡Infórmese Acerca de la Votación por Orden de Preferencia!

1

For the November 8th election, you will use ranked-choice voting to elect the Assessor-Recorder, City Attorney, and Treasurer.

今年十一月八日的選舉,你將會使用優先選擇投票的方式選出下一任的估價官-記錄官、市府律師及財政官。

Para las elecciones del 8 de noviembre, usted usará el método de votación por orden de preferencia para elegir al Tasador-Registrador, Abogado de la Ciudad, y al Tesorero.

2

Ranked-choice voting allows you to rank up to three candidates for the same office.

優先選擇投票方式允許你在選票上,針對同一個職位,依序選擇多至三位理想的候選人。

La votación por orden de preferencia permite elegir hasta tres candidatos para el mismo cargo.

3

If there are fewer than three candidates for the same office, or to rank fewer than three candidates, you may leave any remaining columns blank.

如果某一個職位的候選人數少於三個,或你想選擇少於三個的合格候選人,你可將多餘欄目留為空白。

Si hay menos de tres candidatos para una contienda, o si selecciona a menos de tres candidatos por orden de preferencia, deje las columnas restantes en blanco.

Learn More!

For more information and an interactive demonstration on ranked-choice voting, visit our website at www.sfgov.org/election/rcv.

查詢其它資料!

想進一步了解優先選擇投票方式相關的資料和觀看優先選擇投票方式互動性的演示,請訪問選務處網站 www.sfgov.org/election/rcv.

Aprenda Más!

Para más información y una demostración interactive de la votación preferencia, visite nuestro sitio web en www.sfgov.org/election/rcv.

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FIRST CHOICE PRIMERA SELECCIÓN	SECOND CHOICE SEGUNDA SELECCIÓN	THIRD CHOICE TERCERA SELECCIÓN
Vote for One - Must be different than your first and second choices Vote por Uno - Debe ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección 第一選擇 / 必須與第二、第三選擇不同	Vote for One - Must be different than your first and second choices Vote por Uno - Debe ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección 第二選擇 / 必須與第一、第三選擇不同	Vote for One - Must be different than your first and second choices Vote por Uno - Debe ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección 第三選擇 / 必須與第一、第二選擇不同
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent 現任者	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent 現任者	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT 愛麗諾·羅斯福 Incumbent 現任者
CESAR CHAVEZ 西薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer 勞工組織者	CESAR CHAVEZ 西薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer 勞工組織者	CESAR CHAVEZ 西薩·查維茲 Labor Organizer 勞工組織者
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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister 牧師	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister 牧師	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 小馬丁·路德·金 Minister 牧師
ANNA MAE PICTOU AQUASH 安娜·瑪·皮圖·阿奎什 Indigenous Rights Organizer 土著權益組織者	ANNA MAE PICTOU AQUASH 安娜·瑪·皮圖·阿奎什 Indigenous Rights Organizer 土著權益組織者	ANNA MAE PICTOU AQUASH 安娜·瑪·皮圖·阿奎什 Indigenous Rights Organizer 土著權益組織者



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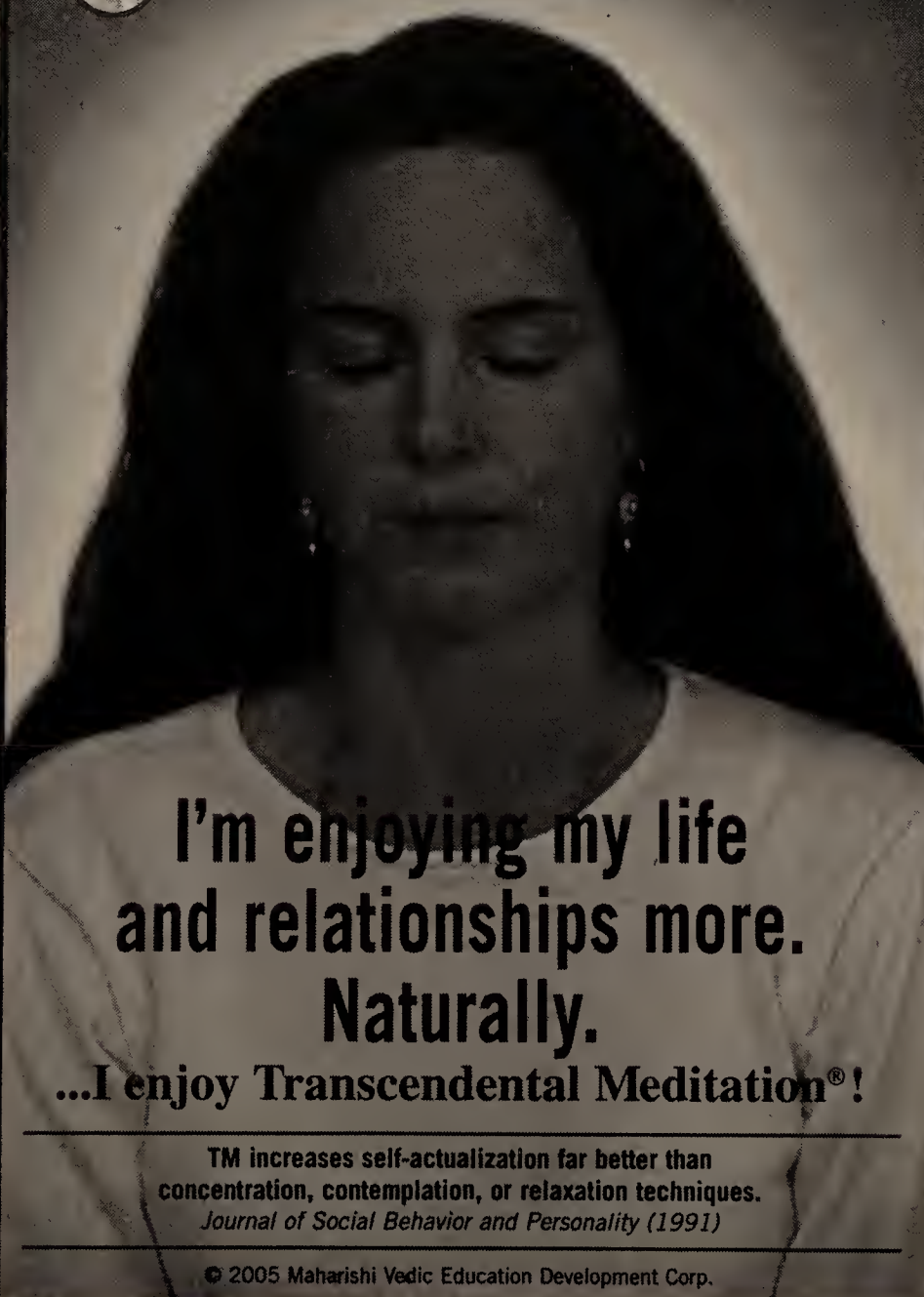
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THE LAST PAGE

Eternal underdog Joshua Davis works from a converted storage space at his home on Clipper Street. He's a contributing writer at Wired magazine and a hot-chocolate connoisseur (Martha and Brothers on Church Street has the best, he says). And these days, he's on top of the publishing world.

His hilarious new book, The Underdog: How I Survived the World's Most Outlandish Competitions, is chalking up great reviews. The "Chaplinesque" work tells how Davis tried to become a

Chapter One of

THE UNDERDOG

by

Noe Valley author Joshua Davis

better provider for his wife Tara by entering a series of absurd contests. He pitted his brain and minimal brawn (5'9", 129 pounds) against Sumo wrestlers, Spanish bullfighters, Indian backwards-runners, and Scandinavian sauna nuts.

Last month, Davis was competing in the national bookstore-and-talk-show circuit, but he will be racing back to Noe Valley in October, in time to sign copies and read from his work at Cover to Cover, 1307 Castro Street, on Oct. 21, at 7 p.m.

When I visited my dad in Los Angeles as a child, he would sit on the edge of my bed and tell me stories as I fell asleep. These weren't like the stories my mom read me every night back home in San Francisco. Dad liked spy thrillers, but at age 5 I didn't understand much. I didn't understand why my parents weren't together anymore and I didn't understand why he was telling me a story about the KGB stabbing people to death with syringes. I started to cry, then hyperventilate, and, in a state of mounting panic, Dad invented Ipski-Pipski, the dashing, adventurous young man who became the mainstay of all my bedtime stories from then on.

Ipski-Pipski was amazingly talented. Before bed, Dad would ask me what I wanted Ipski-Pipski to be that night. If I said, "A fireman!" Ipski-Pipski smelled smoke and rushed off to find a skyscraper in flames. If I said, "An astronaut!" my bed started to shake, and Ipski-Pipski and I were seated atop a giant rocket about to take off. Ipski-Pipski could be anything he or I dreamed of: a race car driver, a cowboy, a soldier. There were no limits.

And then, oftentimes, Dad would go out and leave me with a baby-sitter I never liked. One night, after Ipski-Pipski had climbed Mount Everest and Dad went to a party, I realized that I, too, could do anything I wanted, so I took Max the dog and left. I wasn't tired, particularly after the Everest assault, and I wanted to find my own mountain to climb. Max, a 40-pound Airedale, understood me. He eyed the door and wagged his tail, and as soon as we got out on the street, he started pulling me towards the Hollywood Hills. But Max was also jacked up on Ipski-Pipski stories. He'd been listening every night and wanted to have his own adventures. I was a liability for him. Before we'd reached the end of the block, he was gone, galloping ecstatically towards the Hollywood sign.

I hadn't brought any mountaineering equipment with me. No peanut butter and jelly, no celery, no ice cream. All I had was my Superman pajamas with the crinkly plastic feet. I needed to stock up on supplies first, so I walked down Santa Monica Boulevard until I found a liquor store.

"I need some ice cream," I said to the man behind the counter. He was bearded, unsmiling, and backed by a wall of pint-sized bottles of whisky. "I'm going to climb that mountain." I pointed out the door into the night.

He glanced outside and saw nothing. He seemed surprised and asked me if I was alone. I told him my dog had run away, my dad was at a party, and my babysitter was a member of the KGB.

"Is that right?" he said, smiling for the first time. "And what kind of ice cream is best for mountain climbing?" I didn't hesitate: vanilla Klondike. Very good for going up hills. He dug two cones out of his freezer, dialed 911, and asked me how many mountains I had climbed already. This would be my first, I said, and described how Ipski-Pipski had climbed Everest.

When the cops arrived, I was just at the part where Ipski-Pipski was crawling, inch by inch, toward the summit. I had decided to eat one of the cones—I had two, after all. The cops looked tired and unhappy. Max was trying to dig a hole in the

back seat of their squad car, and they wanted to get him out of there as soon as possible.

"Come back sometime and finish the story during the daytime," the bearded man said. "I'm always here if you need more supplies."

I waved to him as the cops drove me away. I was having a great adventure—meeting new people, riding around in police cars, and eating ice cream. Unfortunately, Max wanted ice cream as well and snatched the second cone out of my hand. I started yelling at him for being such a stupid dog but was distracted by the sight of my dad and all the neighbors waiting for me in front of our apartment building. Dad pulled me out of the car and hugged me hard while trying to wipe away tears.

"Why are you crying, Daddy?"

"Never, ever do that again," he said in his you're-in-big-trouble tone of voice. "Never leave the house without an adult."

"But you told me I can do anything, just like Ipski-Pipski."

"You can, sweetheart. Just not when you're 5."

"Then when?"

"Later. Now you've got to go straight back to bed."

As I tried to fall asleep that night, I imagined all the great things I could do when I wasn't 5. I could fly the fastest airplane, ride a rhinoceros, and paint myself blue like my walls so I'd be invisible in my room. I could hire my own babysitters and tell them I was allowed to lock them in the broom closet and that my bedtime was one in the morning. I comforted myself with the knowledge that someday, I would be old enough to be like Ipski-Pipski.

My father never stopped telling me that I could succeed. He picked me up, held me above his head so that I could dunk, and told me that, someday, I'd discover what it was that made me an individual. But individuality can be hard to come by when there are 280 million other would-be individuals in the country.

The promise that we can be anything we want to be is an American ideal. We live in the land of opportunity, and, as a nation, we believe in individuality. We tell our children that they can grow up to be champions if they really put their mind to it.

But is it true? Did I ever have a shot at basketball stardom? My dad took me to the courts religiously when I was a kid. I'd try to bounce the ball between my legs and I'd smash myself in the nuts. Passes would plonk me in the head and I almost never made a basket. I needed glasses from a young age, but nobody picked up on it. They just thought I was slow with my hands.

The sad truth is that we can't all be in the NBA. There's no way I could even make it on a semi-pro baseball team. I'll never be in the Olympics, I wouldn't be let near a football field, and when I tried hockey at age 6, I was nearly run over by the Zamboni. But my father never stopped telling me

that I could succeed. He picked me up, held me above his head so that I could dunk, and told me that, someday, I'd discover what it was that made me an individual.

But individuality can be hard to come by when there are 280 million other would-be individuals in the country. In practical terms, we first need to figure out when we've achieved uniqueness. We need some way of comparing ourselves to others to prove that we are different. That's why I've always been attracted to competition. Rankings give me a way of knowing how close (or far) I am from being a champion. For instance, I quickly realized that I wouldn't make it to the NBA: I never won even a single game of HORSE. I like to think that was largely due to the fact I couldn't see the net, but, either way, I was never attached to the NBA per se. For me, the implicit promise of America was that I could be the best at something. It didn't matter what.

So I started with basketball and it didn't work out for me. I checked all the big sports off the list by the time I got to high school and was forced to mine a new vein: exploration. Charting new territory had distinguished Columbus, Drake, and Cook: Maybe it could work for me. I bought an ice ax and a compass and started hiking.

But the more I climbed, the more I realized that just about everything had been charted. You used to be able to start walking and, before long, arrive at the edge of the map. Now there is no edge. Thousands have climbed the tallest mountains, so our thirst to be first forces us to fragment the already explored. We have to pretend that being the first to summit the left side of a mountain is just as edifying as being the first to summit it full stop. The world has run out of challenges, so we've had to invent new ones.

As a nation, we're really good at this kind of invention. We've come up with competitive cup-stacking, turned poker into a televised event, and have set new records for pumpkin hurling. I don't think it's a coincidence that the present explosion of non-traditional sports coincides with our emergence as the world's only superpower. America used to be a young country. We had unlimited potential and frontiers to explore. We were destined to be the most powerful nation on earth. Well, we've achieved that, so now we've got to do something else with all our energy. We need something new to inspire the kids. Enter cup-stacking. It's absurd but it fulfills a deeply American need to accomplish what hasn't already been done.

America's push to invent new challenges came at just the right time for me. When I graduated college, I was in a panic. I had given up mountaineering and was running out of things to try. I eventually took a job as a data entry clerk and began to tell myself that maybe the American dream was dead. Maybe I wasn't meant to be great at something. Maybe I was just supposed to be a subpar data entry clerk.

But then the spirit of Ipski-Pipski came back into my life in a most unusual way.

Printed with author's permission from Underdog: How I Survived the World's Most Outlandish Competitions, published September 2005 by Villard, a division of Random House, Inc.

The Noe Valley Voice invites you to submit fiction, literary nonfiction, or poetry for publication on the Last Page. Please mail manuscripts, which should be no more than 1,500 words, to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail lastpage@noevalleyvoice.com. Don't forget to include your name, address, and phone number, and an SASE if you want your manuscript returned. We look forward to hearing from you.